Encounter

December 1971 35p

Havelock Ellis and Co

»Lewd, Scandalous, Obscene«

Arthur Calder-Marshall

DANGEROUS ILLUSIONS ABOUT GENETICS & SOCIETY

C. D. DARLINGTON

CHE'S MARTYRS

ALISTAIR HORNE

POLITICS IN THE THEATRE

John Weightman

IRELAND, AGAIN

JOHN GRIGG

SPECIAL BOOK SECTION

LITERATURE & CRITICISM

ROY FULLER

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TWO STORIES

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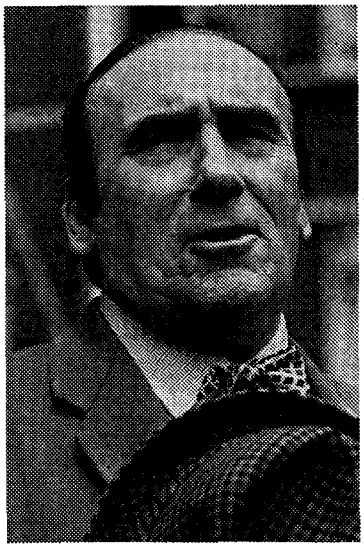

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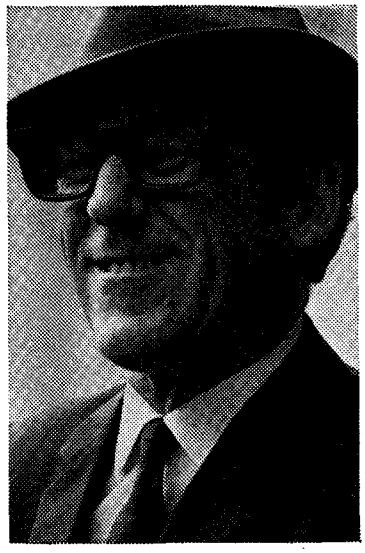

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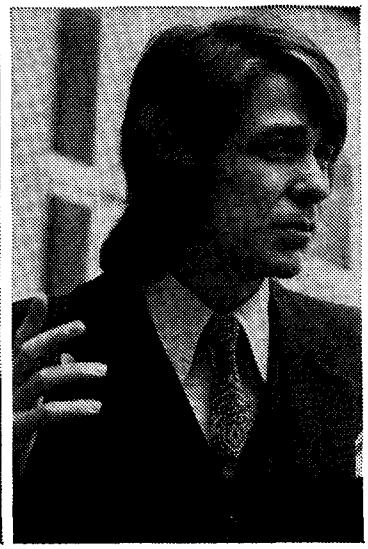

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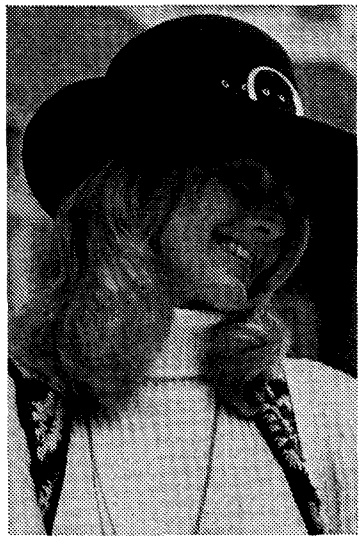

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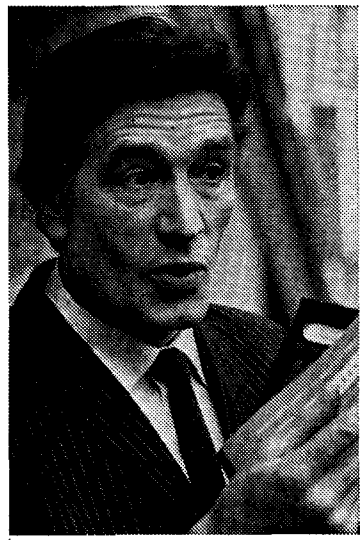

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Encounter

DECEMBER 1971

VOL. XXXVII NO. 6

Edited by MELVIN J. LASKY *and* D. J. ENRIGHT

ASSISTANT EDITOR: *Margot Walmsley.* EDITORIAL ASSISTANT: *Bryan Healing.*
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Published monthly by Encounter Ltd. at 59 St. Martin's Lane London WC2N 4JS
Per copy: UK 35p: USA & Canada $1.25: Back numbers 35p ($1.25).
Annual subscription: UK £4: USA & Canada $14 (by air $15.50): Elsewhere £4.95.
Full-time students (state place and course of study): UK £3.15: USA and Canada $10: Elsewhere £3.15.
Trade/Subscription Department: Encounter Ltd. 59 St. Martin's Lane London WC2N 4JS (01-836 4194).
US news-stand distribution by Gordon & Gotch (USA) Inc. P.O. Box 6014, Long Island City, N.Y. 11106.
Authorised as Second-class mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa, and for payment of postage in cash.
Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y.

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Erving Goffman

'On every page of Erving Goffman's never less than brilliant books one finds scraps of information and observation not only about *Vogue* models, clergymen and the dead, but also about Shetland crofters, Canadian Army dentists, dukes, beauticians, rajahs and a range of characters so wide that I have noticed only one significant absentee from the cast of Goffman's circus, the sociologist himself . . .
'Goffman is certainly a superb social observer and is probably unique among sociologists, dead as well as living – his own avowed master, Simmel, is his only rival – in his ability to see the familiar with the eyes of a stranger, while at the same time retaining his familiarity with what is being viewed. In focusing on face-to-face social encounters as the material in which social relationships are embodied, he reveals, as Jane Austen or Balzac does, that imagination is not the rival of observation, but rather an indispensable prerequisite for it.'
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Georges Csato

The Order

DRESSED IN a shiny black mackintosh, the sort that French policemen wear, I walked from Voronez to the Polish border. My feet and legs were wrapped in paper, and I carried a pair of boots and a rucksack full of pornographic drawings and photographs. It was the big retreat of 1943.

The boots were beautiful, they were made of pigskin, they had high heels and were quite unwearable, I was obsessed with them. They were stolen at the Hungarian frontier. I would have died fighting for those boots, but two weeks earlier I had become too weak to carry them and rather than abandon them, I had persuaded the blacksmith to carry them for me. I promised him forty *pengo* if he could get them to Budapest.

Internal politics had changed while we had been away; at the Hungarian border we were not beaten to death as promised, but treated as heroes. First we were stripped, searched and deloused.

Living skeletons, covered in sores and scars, we stood naked in the cold waiting for our clothes while they were boiled. Finally they were returned to us hopelessly mixed up, and we dressed in whatever we could get hold of regardless of size. We looked even more ridiculous. My boots had disappeared.

An officer came down the train asking for the "painter". He was very amiable and he stole my pornographic collection.

I still had my watch-chain and my pipe. An absurd imitation silver watch-chain, broken and useless as no one had a watch left, and an old cheap pipe, useless also, as we had no tobacco. These two things I had kept all through the war, to me they were precious. All prisoners and most soldiers get this obsession with some object, to others ridiculous, but to oneself possessions of infinite value and importance. The drawings had been "business" for me, it was the chain and the pipe that really mattered, and above all the boots.

The blacksmith came to see me in Budapest after we came out of hospital. He was a nice boy, young, beautiful and very strong. I gave him the money for carrying the boots, he had done what he could—it was not his fault. We had walked side by side for hundreds of kilometres and we had been through that nightmare retreat together: in the end we had nothing to say to each other —we could only talk about the boots.

In 1947 when I decided to leave my country I went to see a famous hypnotist. I could not bring myself to part with all my possessions; to go meant leaving everything behind.

I told the hypnotist of my problem; he was not very sympathetic.

"You are an intelligent man, it should be sufficient for you to tell yourself that all these things are of no intrinsic value, the opportunity of going to Paris should easily compensate you for all this. I don't really see that there is any need for you to be hypnotised!"

Knowing that he had a considerable reputation all over Europe and in America, I asked him why he stayed on in Hungary.

He shrugged his shoulders.

"Look around," he said, "How could I leave my collection of books and pictures behind?"

At the Polish border we rested, we were put into sheds known as the typhus barracks. Here we lay on the ground without any medical aid, but we were fed at irregular intervals. After a few days we ate quite a lot. Every day at least forty men died and we began to take an intense interest in these deaths, they meant more food for us, the survivors. We would prop up the dead men so that for one extra day at least they were counted amongst the living. Men died quietly all round one without drama; turning to speak to a man beside me whom a moment ago had been talking, I would find him dead.

With typhoid one has a high fever for

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weeks, and an agonising pain in the soles of the feet, caused by the raging temperature. With no drugs to bring the fever down very often the heart gives out, or one simply becomes crazy.

I went through a period of constant hallucination and for most of the time I was insane.

Recovering a little, I became cunning. The man lying next to me was obsessed by my pipe and he was determined to possess it. I was equally determined that he should never have it. One morning he nearly succeeded. I was removed as dead along with the others who had died in the night, and placed in the shed that served as a mortuary. My friend, the "publicity agent", being able to walk, came to our barracks to see me and finding me gone, went and looked for me in the mortuary. He was so vital himself he could not imagine that I could die.

I recovered my pipe from my neighbour, and used it to bribe him so that he would carry me outside during the day and put me in the sun. Every day I lent him my pipe, and every day until I could walk, he carried me out in the morning and then back again in the evening.

There was a patch of dusty grass outside the shed and the sun was warm. It was April and the feeling of the grass and the pale sun gave me a sensation of rebirth.

The barber and I sat together side by side, propped up against a wall. We held long conversations, we made no sense, and neither bothered nor understood what the other said.

One morning he produced a piece of old newspaper; it was tattered and already yellow with age. Delighted, we read it aloud to each other. We were ecstatically happy, the sun was shining, and we sat picking the lice off ourselves and reading over and over again those significant words which formed no subject, only a deeply satisfying abstraction.

I do not know how long it was that we had been in the barracks before the officers arrived. One afternoon they strode through the lines of sick and announced that every man who was able was to get up and walk to the railway station. It was a march of sixty kilometres and there would be no time to rest on the way.

For the first time for many months I started to laugh, the order was so absurd. Most of the men could only crawl on their hands and knees, and the idea of marching sixty kilometres was in the realms of fantasy.

Three hours later nearly every man was on his feet.

About three thousand started out that night. I remember very little of the march, but I do remember that when they herded us into the wagons and sealed the train they counted only four hundred.

The Tunnel

THEY WERE the most dramatic sunsets I have ever seen, the horrible combination of colours a complete success. Unlike a painting set in an enclosed space, it was a natural panorama, limitless, and therefore convincing. Fast-moving orange clouds, beautiful in formation, floating across a turquoise background; below, a range of snow-covered mountain peaks and, silhouetted against the snow, deep blue pine forests.

Here in Sianki, high in the Carpathian mountains, I started to hate nature. It had no right to be so beautiful, it had the same quality of injustice that an emotional shock has when you receive it on a sunny day. I was conscious only of the hostility of nature, the dangers of working in the snow, the sun that burnt us during the day, and the freezing cold at night. The day began when we assembled for roll call and orders at four o'clock in the morning. We stood for an hour in the black cold, then we walked eight kilometres to the tunnel. There we

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worked for sixteen hours, then we walked the eight kilometres back to the camp; we had had enough of nature.

It was a railway tunnel that had been destroyed by the Poles before they evacuated the area; our job was to rebuild it. We were a strange mixture of people for tunnel building, businessmen, lawyers, intellectuals and a few peasants; we must have looked very funny, but the men who had sent us here had no sense of humour.

Here we gave up the struggle of hoping for release, and under the influence of the hard physical labour we developed a different outlook. It became a question of concentrating on getting through the day, one had to become practical and somehow simple. We were too overworked to have time for imagination, all associations were cut, all emotions concerning the outside world left us, we were no longer jealous or envious of relatives and friends, there was no time to think of your girl or what she was doing. We worked too hard to have any sexual feelings left. Privacy became something impossible to imagine. Friendships and cliques were formed, and there were emotional relationships, but I do not remember there being any physical ones.

At the very beginning letters from home brought the greatest happiness, but later we became afraid of them and did not want to read them, they "broke in" and upset our new scale of happiness.

I have a visual conception of a theory of mine on mental "elasticity." Imagine someone playing with an elastic band. He keeps stretching it and then relaxing it, suddenly he stretches it too far and it snaps. There is a limit to suffering, one's elasticity of reaction will only stretch so far and then it will break. You "break", and then one day you do not care any more about the things that were once of such importance to you, and you start to build a new scale of values. To "break" really means to give up all hope of getting back to what was once to you normal. During the time that your "elastic" is being stretched to the limit, and before it breaks, you are forming underneath a new "elastic"; already you are beginning to enjoy simple things, things which you used to take for granted, so that when it breaks you have something there to build on. This stretching and breaking process goes on and on, and seemingly one has an endless supply of new mental "elastic."

THE PERIODS before, and immediately after, you "break" are the worst, they are a time of conscious ever-present unhappiness. After a time I learned to shorten this period, and I built up my new "elastic" more quickly by remaining as mentally passive as possible. I even learned to control the memory of my dreams and I created a passive mental block. While I worked I saved myself every effort both physical and mental, every movement was planned so as to use up the least possible energy and to avoid any accident. I thought only of the time ahead when we would be able to sit down in the snow at midday and eat something, and I anticipated the pleasure of the half cigarette I had saved. Then, when afternoon came, you knew that the worst of the day was over, and you could begin to look forward to lying down under cover.

You leave a normal scale of living slowly and painfully, but you return to it with incredible speed; in as little as three days you are blasé again.

In the camp we had the time to grow this new "elastic"; it was not a sudden shock, the sort of shock that completely unbalances a man when there is nothing there to build on and results in a nervous breakdown or suicide. I never heard of anyone in the camp trying to commit suicide. I had friends who were neurotics and hysterics, but they never had nervous breakdowns; under the conditions in which we lived there was no room for mental luxury. We had to work physically very hard and in the same proportion as the men became physically stronger so they became mentally weaker. Your muscles begin to rule you and the rhythm of work and rest exclude all mental exertion, your body takes over completely and you even begin to forget the stupidity and uselessness of the work, for whom, or why you are doing it. You cease to think even of the war, your past, your girl, nothing is left except the intense conscious happiness of rest, warmth and food.

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Humiliation, physical suffering, cold and hunger, these things bring a man down to animal level. It is not the memory of home or your girl that keeps you going, it is simply the intense happiness of eating a potato, being warm for a little while or having a temporary roof over your head. To live on the lowest physical level, to be overworked to the point of collapse, to have all your associations cut, under these conditions you experience conscious happiness as never before. When things were very bad in Russia we developed new scales of pleasure, for instance, purposely to take off a glove in the icy cold for the pleasure of putting it back on again.

With physical suffering we all developed a strong resistance to sickness, it simply was not worthwhile being ill; if a man collapsed he was beaten.

AFTER TWO WEEKS we had a fatal accident in the tunnel. It was the first death in our enclosed and isolated community. By being the first it assumed an exaggerated importance and each man associated himself with it. It shocked and impressed us all, it is the one that I remember.

I was sitting in my "studio" when a truck pulled up outside. It was an unusual hour for one to arrive so I went down to see what had happened. The doctor and one of our men were lifting a body out of the truck. I remembered the boy very well, he was about twenty-one, quiet and pleasant. I remembered too his terrible fear of working in the tunnel; that morning a prop had broken and a huge stone had rolled on him.

Candles, a new uniform and a coffin were ordered. The coffin gave trouble, the camp carpenter was a rich banker who had paid for the job, the real carpenter worked in the tunnel. But by the evening the banker had managed to make something out of two packing cases very badly knocked together.

When the company returned from work the boy was already lying in state. Volunteers were called for to stand guard. As I was the only one who had the opportunity to rest during the day, I took six hours of the night.

They put him in a stable, it was ice-cold. The night was clear, bright and quite silent, there was no wind and no movement. The stable doors were open, they framed a travel poster view of a star-infested sky, snow-covered mountains, and black pine trees.

Alone I watched the boy for six hours. I had been given a gun for the occasion. Hypnotised, I stood as though a whole regiment were watching me; I was very conscious of the incongruity of the situation but I could not help it.

The silence was intense, and as always in such a silence I became very sensitive to the slightest sound. At first it was the hiss and sputter of the two candles that were burning at the foot of the coffin. Later the soft whistling of rats.

Rats are rushabout animals, forever prying, busy and curious. They came and looked at us. I refused to move and drive them away. They became bolder, the whistling more concentrated, more and more arrived, then when nothing happened and neither of us moved, they started to copulate.

During the night I moved only once, to change over from the undamaged side of his face to the destroyed side. I never turned my head, only my eyes, and I watched him all night.

In the morning they took off his new uniform and buried him in a ditch.

AT SIANKI I suffered the most mentally; although things were to get much worse I was never again so unhappy. Most of the time I was far better off than the others, I spent my days in a warm room, I was better fed, I had cigarettes, but I had time to think. When they were short of men I left my room and went to work in the tunnel. It gave me a balance and made me appreciate the conditions I was in as opposed to the others.

I had been the first to meet the new Commander; he had sent for me when we were in the assembly camp.

"I have been looking through the list of my company and I see that you are a painter."

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He was a small thin man, pale and anaemic, about forty years old and going bald.

"I am going to make you a proposition. I want you to paint for me anything that I commission. If you don't accept—well!" he shrugged his shoulders, "You must realise that this is a punishment company and you will soon be doing hard labour under the worst possible conditions—I feel sorry for your hands."

I accepted.

I worked for one week in the tunnel, and then the Commander sent for me again.

"I haven't forgotten the proposition I made you", he said. "I just thought it would be good for you to find out what you were escaping from by working for me, it should make you more enthusiastic."

He showed me what was to be my "studio", a tiny room, but warm, and with a good light. He shut the door and offered me a cigarette, and then began to explain the work he wanted me to do. It was pornographic.

Every morning at six o'clock he visited me; I had my meals in the little room and I returned to the camp to sleep at night. Every day I had to produce one picture.

If one has to do extraordinary things one tends to overdo them. I produced one orgy after another, each one more complicated than the last, the pages bursting with figures. But after a time I calmed down and finally arrived at using one figure only.

He never asked me to paint him a landscape, he must have disliked that sort of nature as much as the rest of us. Surrounded by so much beauty, he was too sophisticated to want it reproduced.

I sat alone in my room with this dramatic view of mountains and snow, and steadily worked through every conceivable erotic situation. He seemed satisfied with the work and he brought me cigarettes every day. He studied the pictures very carefully and professionally and he gave me much technical advice. He was an engineer in civilian life, and sometimes he drew with incredible speed and skill, constructional diagrams of what he wished me to do.

"The skeleton of joy," he said, "and now it is up to you to make sex out of it."

Reed: An Anglo-Saxon Riddle

Solitary, rooted by tidal-river,
a murmuring recluse, I may be chosen
for lonely flute-music at feasting-time,
by a bench of honey-drunkards,
or pared to a point, to scratch on parchment
a man's loneliest, most secret affections.

Harold Massingham

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Arthur Calder-Marshall

Havelock Ellis & Company

"Lewd, Scandalous & Obscene"

". . . unlawfully, wickedly, maliciously, scandalously did publish, sell and utter, a certain lewd, wicked, bawdy, scandalous and obscene libel, in the form of a book entitled Studies in the Psychology of Sex, Volume I: Sexual Inversion, *by Havelock Ellis, in which said book are contained among other things, divers wicked, lewd, impure, scandalous and obscene libels and matters, which said book is to the manifest corruption of the morals and minds of the liege subjects of our said Lady the Queen, in contempt of our said Lady the Queen, and her laws, in violation of decency, morality and good order and against the peace of our said Lady the Queen, her Crown and Dignity."*

From the indictment of GEORGE BEDBOROUGH *on which the Grand Jury returned a true bill on 14 September, 1898.*

HENRY HAVELOCK ELLIS was born in 1859, the only son of a merchant sea-captain, who was only at home for short periods between his lengthy voyages overseas. His mother never showed him or his four younger sisters the affection usual towards children. She was not a demonstrative woman; and the only signs of love she showed him were of a nature so unusual that he did not till much later recognise them as such. The first was to thrust into his face a diaper sopping with urine; the second was to make water in front of him, when he, aged 12, was with her in Regent's Park. He was always slow in his recognition of other people's motives and it was not until years later that he acknowledged the truth of his sister Louie's comment, "She was flirting with you!"

But before that, he had recognised in himself what he called "the germ of a perversion." He first called it, after the water nymph, "Undinism", and later "urolagnia": but in simple terms, it was that he found sexual excitement in watching women pee.

Mrs Ellis was a devout evangelical and Havelock grew up with an ambition to be a preacher. But when, in his teens, he went to Australia and became a teacher at Kanga Creek he lost his Christian faith and received as a sort of revelation his destiny, to become an Apostle of Sex. He was very shy and he tended to adore his loved ones from afar; but in his mind he was very bold. On his return to England, he offered himself to the widow of James Hinton as the editor of his papers. Hinton had been a brilliant doctor, but obsessed with sexual desires, which he had rationalised into a philosophy of Free Love; and the young Havelock Ellis, physically inhibited but intellectually the freest of free lovers, swallowed his rationalisations as a revelation of a new truth. As a reward, he was financed as a medical student at St Thomas's.

While a student, he augmented his grant by literary work, editing for example the excellent Mermaid edition of the Elizabethan and Restoration dramatists. He drove literature and science in tandem. He was the first critic to recognise the importance of Ibsen and Walt Whitman. He outraged Swinburne with his revelation of Marlowe's homosexuality. He published the first work in English on criminology and though it was largely derived from the unscientific theories of Lombroso, it laid foundations for later writers to rebuild. He was one of the founding members of the Fellowship of the New Life, an idealistic congregation for libertarian perfectability now known best as the compost heap from which the Fabian Society sprang.

IN HIS MIDDLE TWENTIES, Havelock Ellis was a man with a double life. Publicly he was the

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most daring, and indeed libidinous, of the New Men. Privately he was shy to the point of impotence. His love affair with Olive Schreiner, a spirit as free as his, never came to ejaculation point. His tenderness beguiled, but his undinism repelled her. They became not lovers, as he wished, but very good friends.

From Hinton, and the homosexual Edward Carpenter, Ellis had accepted that there was not one type of love relationship, but a possibility of many. When he met Edith Lees, the secretary of the Fellowship for the New Life, he first repelled her by his public reputation. But when she read *The New Spirit*, she realised that Havelock was the man she could love.

Their courtship and marriage was peculiar. They met by chance at the Cornish cottage of Miss Agnes Jones, a Hintonian lady who had designs on young Ellis. Ellis was going to take a *locum* for a Cornish doctor on holiday. Edith was journeying with her maid to the cottage she rented. They were attracted spiritually and met later in London, Edith coming round to his digs in Paddington to discuss the burning topics of the day, such as "the Woman Question" (and herself). Ellis did not talk about the "Man Question" (and himself). He was a great listener and even though he was engaged upon his preliminary study *Man and Woman*, which would clear the decks for his life-work, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, he always had time for the confidences of the eager, vital, blue-eyed, little Miss Lees. He was at no time as passionately interested in her life as he had been in Olive Schreiner's. But he was touched when she confessed to him her grief at the departure of a member of the Fellowship of the New Life, the only man with whom she had ever been in love. She told him of men who had been in love with her and proposed marriage; of girls at school she had been in love with and of physical relations she had had with women later. He listened to the story of her childhood. Her mother had died soon after Edith's birth but Edith kept her mother's portrait by her throughout her life. Her father she hated as a tortured man who could not help torturing others, and her step-mother she loathed. It was an unhappy background, going back to Edith's great-grandfather, who had made the family fortune but loathed his son as much as he loved animals.

EDITH WAS a very odd young woman and Havelock was a very odd young man. Over a period of two years, they grew closer and closer together, apparently discussing the Woman Question, Free Love, the need for independence, the spirituality of Man-Woman love, but in fact sounding one another out about the possibility of a relationship in the modern manner. Havelock earned only enough to maintain himself in the style to which he had become accustomed; but Edith had a private income commensurate and agreed that it would be degrading for a woman to receive money from a man. Havelock needed solitude for his work: Edith agreed that it would be intolerable for a man and woman to live day in and day out under the same roof. Havelock did not want to have children and considered that in view of her various nervous breakdowns Edith ought not to have children. Edith's Harley Street specialist said that it would be disastrous to have children and advised against marriage. Why then, suggested Havelock, should they not just become lovers, living together off and on?

This suggestion was repudiated so sharply that he never repeated it. Edith accepted free love as a possible form of union, but not for herself: and so finally they decided to get married at Paddington Registry Office.

Though their discussions had been protracted and conducted with the appearance of frankness to be expected between a New Man and a New Woman, it had on one essential point been unfortunately vague. In taking the gentle Havelock to be her husband, Edith Lees believed that she would achieve with him the sexual union which she feared with other men. But Havelock in stressing the absence of passion on his side was preparing her for a *mariage blanche*, in which spiritual union would be all, apart perhaps for a spot of Undinism.

Theirs was no conventional marriage from the start. After signing the marriage contract, they separated, Havelock to his bachelor digs, Edith to her room at Fellowship House. There was no wedding breakfast, but Edith invited all her many friends to an *At Home*, arranging that her reclusive spouse should put in only a brief appearance. Next day, 20 December 1891, they went to honeymoon in Paris, where he showed her churches, museums and art galleries, but made no attempt to initiate her in the art of married love. After two weeks, they returned to their separate establishments in London. Edith left not long after for Cornwall, where she rented a cottage at Carbis Water, which she proposed to make ready for the two of them, when Havelock could tear himself away from the British Museum Reading Room. She was joined there by an old friend from the north, whom Ellis in *My Life* calls "Claire."

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In the first week of March 1892, Edith wrote to her husband, confessing that her relationship with Claire had taken on a passionate character, and asking what he was going to do about it. Havelock, if we are to believe his autobiography, never thought that Edith might be challenging his manhood, wanting him to claim the physical love which *faute de mieux,* she was giving to Claire. But he does record the astonishment of them both that he should give their affair his blessing. He was a man with preternaturally slow reactions and he did not become conscious of his jealousy until a year later!

There was, however, the problem of his male pride. If Edith was a congenital invert, he would not have failed her sexually—indeed he would show his spiritual greatness if he could preserve his marriage on a plane superior to sexual appetite. In this ideal of varietist love, he was not alone.[1]

IN JUNE 1892, HE RECEIVED through his friend Arthur Symons a suggestion from John Addington Symonds, that as editor of The Contemporary Science Series he should commission a book on *Sexual Inversion.* Symonds was writing from Davos where he was undergoing treatment for tuberculosis. He was a congenital invert, who had married and produced children in the hope that he would become sexually normal. The attempt had been a piteous failure. He had written a study of paederasty in the ancient world and made a practice of it in the modern. He had also written a pamphlet called *A Modern Problem* which he had circulated privately among sympathisers like Edmund Gosse. But now in his rampant old age he wanted to spread the gospel publicly. Ellis, from what he had gathered in his sanatorium, was a homosexual: and as a doctor, he could give such a book a scientific cachet, if they collaborated.

Soon they were in brisk correspondence. The book could not be part of the Contemporary Science Series, but Ellis would love to collaborate, with Symonds contributing the historical element, Ellis the scientific, and the two of them with their various contacts the case-histories. "Allow me," wrote Symonds at the outset, "to congratulate you on your marriage, of which I had not heard. I hope it may prove as true a source of happiness as mine upon the whole has been to me."[2]

The correspondence between the collaborators up to Symonds' death in 1893 is fascinating because of its conflicts. *Sexual Inversion* was to be presented as an objective scientific work. But Symonds wanted it to be presented as a form of varietist love superior to normal sexuality. Havelock Ellis, the propagandist and friend of Edward Carpenter, wanted to amend the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885. This bill had been introduced "to make further provision for the protection of women and girls, the suppression of brothels and other purposes." The age of consent had been raised from thirteen to sixteen. Into this bill, Henry Labouchere, the senior member for Nottingham, who stood by Charles Bradlaugh in all his struggles to be installed as his Junior Member, introduced a clause relating to homosexuality, even between consenting adult males in private. There had been the Dublin Castle Scandal in the same year, and Labouchere proposed late that hot August evening in 1885 that homosexuals should be sentenced to 12 months imprisonment. The Attorney General accepted the amendment, and a further amendment extending the one year to two, and thenceforth British homosexual males had been liable to punishments more stringent than in any European country. The reason why women were not punished, we are told, is that Queen Victoria refused to believe that they did such things.

Between Symonds, who wanted to make a virtue of homosexuality, and Ellis, who wanted to make it an offence not punishable by law, there yawned a series of chasms which their correspondence tried to bridge. Symonds wanted to produce instances of "Inverts" of genius throughout history, including Michelangelo, Marlowe, Frederick the Great, and Shakespeare. Ellis stuck at Shakespeare. It would alienate the Shakespeareans without achieving anything.

How should they describe "inversion"? Symonds suggested that it was something like colour-blindness, a sort of physical anomaly. Ellis suggested something far more positive,

[1] In *The Adult,* "a vigorous little paper edited by George Bedborough" (in Ellis' own words), Miss Sophie Lepper (later Leppel) late of Ottendorf, Hanover, advertised her curious "Vitalism Series", No. 9, in which she affirmed "that the Average Man and Woman sacrifice their vital powers on the altar of their animal passions." The secret of longevity and marital bliss was complete chastity. "The victim of self-abuse is frequently but a victim of indigestion," added Miss Leppel. It may seem absurd to compare Miss Leppel's observations about diet and self-abuse with Dr Ellis' studies. But his essay in the *American Journal of Dermatology* (May 1902) on "The Bladder as a Dynamometer" sprang from his schoolboy experience. He couldn't pee as far as the other chaps.

[2] University of Bristol Library.

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"colour-hearing", that form of "koinaesthesia" that led certain talented people such as Joris-Karl Huysmans to associate colours with sounds and *vice versa*. Symonds thought that was a splendid idea, though he was not so keen on Havelock's idea that an invert was a "sport" of nature.

The two men never met. Symonds came over to London on a visit and stayed at the Athenaeum but was too busy to meet his collaborator face to face. Perhaps he felt that they had even more in difference than they had in common. They could not even agree on the sort of publisher they needed. "I think it ought to be published by one of the medical publishers," wrote Symonds, "But about this I am not so sure, since one wants the subject to come under the notice of laymen." Ellis had two reasons for wanting a discreet general publisher. If the Labouchere clause was to be repealed, there must be a circulation of the book among the opinion-formers and the legislators, writers, school-teachers, clergymen, lawyers, Justices of the Peace, and Members of Parliament. This was his public, and quite valid, reason for a work which was not one of abstract science but of well-argued special pleading. But he had also a private reason. Friends would understand the distinctly odd circumstances of his marriage if they realised that he was married to a congenital sexual invert and that instead of being a very inadequate husband he was a New Husband with a soul above sex.

ELLIS' BEHAVIOUR had been regarded as odd in literary circles. Comparing himself to the harrassed Ernest Rhys, Ellis had written to his wife that no one in London could believe that he was not a bachelor. Even in varietist circles, such as that of the Fellowship of the New Life or of the Legitimation League (to which the Ellises did not belong, but whose magazine *The Adult* published their friend Edward Carpenter's work), their marital pattern was remarkable.

In February 1893, Symonds wrote from his sanatorium in Davos:

> *My dear Ellis* (As collaborators, may we drop the Mr.?) I hope to send you tomorrow or next day sixteen autobiographical cases of English inverts, for the genuineness of all of which I can vouch. . . . Are you beginning to write your part of the book? I only ask this because I should like to go *pari passu* with yourself. I do not want to hurry you. Only I do not want to be behindhand with my promised contributions.

Ellis answered that for the next few months he would be wholly occupied in finishing *Man and Woman*, the study of secondary sexual characteristics which was the curtain-raiser to *The Studies in the Psychology of Sex* and there was no hurry for Symonds' copy.

It was almost the end of their correspondence. On 19 April Symonds died suddenly in Rome during an influenza epidemic. As his literary executor he left Horatio Brown, a like-minded friend, who gave Havelock Ellis full permission to use Symonds' material. And so in his slow, scholarly way, Ellis got to work.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH earlier German works on sex-psychology, he compiled a number of case histories, some from Symonds, some from Edward Carpenter, and others from his own enquiries. Of the last, the most important was that of his wife Edith.

But before examining this, one must observe that the scientific ethics of the day held that details must be so changed that the subject of the case history should be unrecognisable. Ellis over-fulfilled this principle with his wife in the case history of *Miss H.*

In *My Life* Ellis recorded that Edith's grandfather was a drunken collier who pursued his wife with a carving knife. Edith's father inherited direct from *his* grandfather, went to university and acquired some culture. But when his first wife died giving birth to Edith, he became eccentric, "one of those tortured persons who cannot help torturing others." He married a second time, a woman who played in Edith's life the fairy role of ugly step-mother.

In the case history of Miss H, Edith's father and grandfather were presented with abbreviated honesty. But "her mother and her mother's relatives are entirely healthy, and normal in disposition" must have appeared to Edith a wounding lie, when she had carried with her, and did till she died, the photograph of the mother whom she loved all the more because she could not remember her. The death of her mother, the cruelty of her step-mother and the ambivalence of her father were the mar-all of Edith Lees, but there was no mention of them in the Case History of Miss H.

Edith's father had roused in her a resentment not merely against himself, but against men in general. She had not known affection until she was sent to a convent school, from which she was removed when it became plain that the nuns were teaching her to love God. A "German lady of freethinking opinions" named Madame Thesma supplanted the love of God

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by a love of Shakespeare. And affection found its outlet in schoolgirl pashes.

In Miss H's case history, it was only these adolescent friendships that were mentioned, and subsequent affairs with women. There was no hint that these affairs might spring *(a)* from a desire to regain her lost mother and *(b)* disgust with men inspired by her father. Miss H's feeling towards men was described as friendly, but she had never been sexually attracted toward a man and her feeling towards marriage had always been one of repugnance. There was no possibility of anyone recognising Edith Ellis in Miss H. But Edith herself saw Miss H as a gross travesty of herself, designed by Havelock to excuse his own sexual failure. So she set to work on a novel, given the dank title of *Seaweed*,[3] in which she gave a fictional version of the marriage as it appeared to her. Kit's woman was married to a man who had been rendered sexually impotent by an accident, but she preferred his spiritual companionship to the physical love of other men. Though Edith stood by her husband throughout the troubles in which his sex books landed him, she later told friends they were scientifically valueless and Havelock's real achievement lay in books like *The New Spirit*.

IT IS DIFFICULT to decide how "scientific" Ellis himself considered *The Studies in the Psychology of Sex*. But from his conduct it is clear that he thought the primary importance of *Sexual Inversion* was to change the attitudes of opinion-formers towards homosexuality and secure a repeal of the labouchere Clause. This admirable propagandist aim swallowed up the minor motive of justifying himself towards Edith.

In fact, he had found another way of proving himself physically. On 23 May 1893, fourteen months after giving his blessing to Edith and her Lesbian friend, Havelock kissed Miss Amy Barker-Smith, the young daughter of a medical colleague, on a fallen tree in Haslemere. With the forthrightness proper in a New Man, he immediately told Edith. Edith received the news with a fury characteristic of the most jealous of old-fashioned wives. She could not forget, or let Havelock forget, that he had kissed that "femininity", as she called the gentle Amy. She had a furious temper, but Havelock suffered in silence. It was not until early in 1895, the moment he had exchanged the rooms in Paddington which he shared with his sister Louie for chambers in Fountain Court with his bachelor friend Arthur Symons, that he took his affair with Amy beyond a kiss; how far beyond, we do not know, but probably not very far as normal lovers go.

MEANWHILE, TWO YEARS TO A DAY after that stolen kiss in Haslemere, something happened which made the publication of *Sexual Inversion* a matter of extreme urgency, great courage, supreme folly and the utmost caution. Under the Labouchere Clause of the Criminal Amendment Act, Mr Justice Wills sentenced two persons to two years' imprisonment with hard labour. One was a dissolute playboy named Alfred Taylor, the other the most brilliant dramatist of his day with two plays running concurrently in the West End, Oscar Wilde.

At the height of the scandal, Havelock Ellis sent the last chapters of *Sexual Inversion* to Horatio Brown, for his comments as Symonds' executor. He replied:

> Thank you for letting me read the conclusion. I think it is admirable in its calmness, its judicious unbiased tone. And if anyone can persuade people to look the question in the face, this should.

Edward Carpenter, whose *Love's Coming of Age* had ventured, though less daringly, into the same forbidden country, advised Ellis to seek publication first in Germany, where it should be published without difficulty and reviewed with respect. In 1896 *Das Konträre Geschlechtsgefühl* von Havelock Ellis und John Addington Symonds was published by a scientific house in Leipzig. The few reviews it received in specialist journals were favourable.

With Wilde still in jail, Ellis had to decide how best to proceed in Britain. He had extracts from the book published in the *Alienist & Neurologist* and on the strength of this he could probably have secured publication from a strictly medical house. But if he did so, he would not reach the public he wanted, preachers, teachers, lawyers, journalists, civil servants and legislators. He tried instead Williams & Norgate, a small firm with a scientific and a general list. The manuscript was sent to Dr Hack Tuke, editor of the *Journal of Mental Science*, for whom Ellis had worked over the past ten years. Dr Hack Tuke advised Williams & Norgate against publication, on the grounds that the book might fall into the wrong hands.

Ellis ridiculed this reasonable argument and

[3] Changed to *Kit's Woman*, when revised and reissued in 1907.

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in *My Life* observed that Hack Tuke was "a Quaker brought up in an old-fashioned school which could not possibly view sympathetically any detailed approach to the problems of sex." He ignored the fact that Dr Hack Tuke was the father of an artist, living in England, whose homosexual proclivities were publicly advertised by his paintings of male nudes. Those who stood to gain most by the repeal of the Labouchere clause were most afraid to come out on Ellis' side. Ellis' own position, of having a wife whom he wanted to accept as a congenital sexual invert, was exceptional and possibly unique.

He made no further efforts to place the book with an established publisher, whether specialist or general, because a scientific friend of his suggested the perfect outlet, a private and progressive publishing house, financed by a gentleman named George[4] Astor Singer, who as his two last names implied, was a man of wealth. He spent much of his time abroad, but his London business was handled by his brother-in-law, Dr Roland de Villiers, who was editor of *The University Magazine and Free Review*, a weighty monthly, devoted to things progressive. He was also printer of *The Adult*, the livelier organ of The Legitimation League, founded for the reform of the bastardy laws, but increasingly concerned with varietist love. Dr de Villiers was on the committee of The Legitimation League, shared a large house at Bushey, Herts, with his sister, Mrs G. Astor Singer, and ran a fine, modern printing press at Watford.

Havelock and Edith Ellis called on Dr de Villiers at his house in Bushey. He was "undoubtedly a German, probably of the Rhine, though familiar with English, a large, gentle, fleshy man with something of the aspect and the stealthy tread of a cat." Mrs George Astor Singer is not described by Ellis, but Edward Carpenter, who warned the Ellises that she was not the wife of the non-existent George Astor Singer but of de Villiers himself, called her "a puckered creole." There was also a young woman with a little boy. Her name was Anna and sometimes she was Mrs Singer's niece, at others the maid, and always de Villiers' mistress. There was a lot of gossip about the mysterious doctor and his ménage, but this did not trouble the Ellises, who were against what Edith called "the respectables."

The important thing was that Dr de Villiers said he would recommend his brother-in-law to publish *Sexual Inversion*. The financial proposals he made were satisfactory to Ellis and he fell in with the suggestion that the book should be presented as a scientific work, but circulated cautiously among clergymen, schoolteachers and others who might be interested. It was a discreet method extensively used by the peddlers of pornography: and Edith, more worldly than her husband, might have been suspicious if Dr de Villiers had not proposed enthusiastically to publish her novel *Seaweed*, which had been rejected by even the *avant-garde* John Lane as "too daring."

ELLIS CONFESSED that he was shocked when de Villiers suggested publishing *Sexual Inversion* under the imprint "Wilson & Macmillan", two non-existent partners he dreamed up on the spur of the moment and who continued their mythical careers even when Ellis rejected what would sound like a branch of the House of Macmillan. They became partners in the Watford University Press. Feebly Havelock protested that there was no Watford University; but gave way when the feline doctor pointed out that the Press was at Watford and published *The University Magazine*.

STUDIES IN THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SEX, *Volume One, Sexual Inversion* by Havelock Ellis and John Addington Symonds was ready for publication in the summer of 1897, when suddenly Horatio Brown, responding to the pressure of the Addington Symonds family, approached Dr de Villiers and bought up the complete edition on the condition that any future edition should omit the name of John Addington Symonds and the Greek essay written by him, while allowing Ellis to incorporate case histories provided no mention was made of J.A.S. Havelock Ellis was astonished at Dr de Villiers' calmness at this blow, apparently unaware that even an honest publisher welcomes the chance of disposing of a complete edition to a single purchaser. Dr de Villiers had an additional reason for calmness, in that he did not hand over the complete edition to Horatio Brown, but disposed of a substantial number on the black market without paying any royalty.

Ellis does not tell us when he discovered this leakage, but at no time did it make any difference to his dealings with his publisher, even though it was a breach of contract with both Horatio Brown and himself, which if not

[4] In *My Life*, Ellis calls him *J.* Astor Singer, and implies that no books had yet been published. This is not correct, like a great deal of his account of what was to follow.

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properly explained should have been a matter for legal action. He was probably too pleased at securing to himself full rights in the first volume of his lifework to worry about anything except how he could remodel the book for his own purposes. On 3 August 1897, he wrote Carpenter to say that Asquith, consulted by Brown, had thought the literary element could go against the book. By 25 October, he was expecting the new edition "to appear daily" and *Seaweed* was "to come out shortly." Reviews of the German edition had been almost without exception very favourable, but had only appeared in very special quarters, medical, medico-legal, etc. It was to prove different in London.

ON 6 DECEMBER 1897, in the Council Chamber of the Holborn Restaurant, Mr Oswald Dawson of Leeds, the founder of The Legitimation League, gave a lecture on "The Outcome of Legitimation." Dawson had been honorary secretary of the league while its headquarters had been in Leeds, but when they were moved to London, George Bedborough took over as secretary and his wife Louie as treasurer of the league. The aims of the league were broadened to include "the education of public opinion in the direction of freedom in sexual relationships." Mr Wordsworth Donisthorpe, the first president, had resigned in protest and in his place was elected Miss Lillian Harman, who was in the words of *The University Magazine* "the American apostle of Free Love" and in her own words "the only woman ever to go to jail for living with the father of her child."

In his lecture Mr Dawson wanted to make plain his sympathy with the broadened aims of the Legitimation League. Having touched on the sexual proposals of Moses Harman (the father of "the American apostle") and the theories of Emil F. Ruedebusch, he remarked:

> Prostitution was to be made entirely a matter of free trade. The policeman's connection with brothels was to be limited to the extent to which he now sometimes indulges himself—that of making unofficial visits to them. (Laughter) There was to be absolute freedom for the person who makes it his or her business to carry on negotiations as a third party. There would be no Contagious Diseases Acts, but there would be free trade in sanitation; and this meant, amongst other things, that there would be Neo-Malthusian freedom—that it would be possible to advertise and sell all the appliances of contraception: and, having obtained these liberties, the result would be a state of things which would materially help the solution of the payment question. Not only would the ranks of prostitutes be swelled in the matter of numbers, but there would be brought into their ranks contingents from the upper classes, who are now too prudent to risk the chances of disease and the bullying by police. Not only would this have the effect of reducing prices, but women who had no wish to practise prostitution for gain would be only too glad to avail themselves of the new conditions which freedom would bring about, to gratify their sexual appetites. They might even be willing to pay for the luxury. (Laughter.)[5]

Earlier in his lecture, Mr Dawson said:

> that there has recently been published by the University Press a marvellous book by Havelock Ellis. In an appendix on Ulrich's views, they were told that that writer appears to advocate marriages between persons of the same sex! And, more than this, that the profession of a responsible agent for bringing together persons of homosexual proclivities should be made a legitimate one.

These prematurely permissive audacities might have passed unnoticed, if it had not been for the presence of Mr Sweeney, an affable Irishman. John Sweeney attended every meeting of the Legitimation League and though he never spoke, he listened attentively and showed an interest not only in the speakers but also in the audience. He took tickets for all the dinners at the Holborn Restaurant, bringing along a guest. He often dropped in at No 16 John Street, which served as a home for Mr and Mrs Bedborough and offices for the Legitimation League and their magazine *The Adult*. It was also an informal bookshop, selling books published by the Watford University Press, *The Adult* and kindred spirits, such as Fraulein Lepper, the Unitist Free Lover, whose invaluable *Suitable Food, Wise Sex-Love and Immortality* cost only 7d post free. John Sweeney bought Legitimation League publications lavishly and sometimes discussed their contents with George Bedborough, a young man who was only too willing to expound the varieties of varietism. Sometimes Sweeney asked him whether he was not worried at the number of adolescents who attended lectures that were by definition Adult. Bedborough admitted the difficulty, but said that he was unable to impose an age limit on the audience. Since one of the favourite Legitimation League doctrines was the cure of masturbatory insanity among boys and chlorosis among girls through sexual intercourse supervised by their parents, Bedborough's reply seems pharisaical.

[5] Reported by A. S. Fryer. Pamphlet published by *The Adult*, pp. 10-11.

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DESPITE APPEARANCES to the contrary, John Sweeney's primary interest was not in Free Love but in Anarchism. As a boy in Ireland, he had longed to grow up and join the Royal Irish Constabulary. Unfortunately when he left school, he was not tall enough and joined the London police force. He loved his work so much that when on his day off he saw a man commit a minor theft in King Street, Hammersmith, he followed him home to arrest him. He attracted the notice of Scotland Yard and on the principle of setting an Irishman to catch an Irishman he was used to infiltrate the Clan na Gael and other nationalist organisations. From this he graduated to subversion in general. It was rather dreary work since nihilists and anarchists were so poor that he had to spend most of his time in scruffy cafés. So when news came that anarchists were infiltrating Legitimation League meetings, using the discussion periods for the dissemination of their own seditious doctrines, Detective Inspector John Sweeney was pleased. He liked his food and drink and enjoyed being forced to dine at the Holborn Restaurant in the course of duty. The Legitimation League meetings were lively and George Bedborough, the son of a parson, was a clever, amusing and charming young man, even though his ideas were cock-eyed.

Sweeney conferred with his superiors and between them they concocted a plan worthy of the libertarian principles of late 19th-century Britain. In a country proud of giving political asylum to Marx, Engels, and Prince Kropotkin, it was impossible to arrest anarchists for what they thought and said. But it was possible to limit their opportunities for propaganda. The Legitimation League had to be smashed, because it was an anarchist front-organisation, but no mention must be made of politics.

Whether by chance or connivance with the police, Lord Egerton, Sir Humphrey de Trafford, and Sir Theodore Martin circulated a letter to the National Press protesting against Oswald Dawson's advocacy of free trade in prostitution. "The strong hand of the law," they wrote, "should crush a teaching which would turn society into groups of harlots." Public demand for action strengthened the hand of the Home Secretary. But as Sweeney remarked in his memoirs, *At Scotland Yard,*

The Public Prosecutor was anxious to protect the public from all the objectionable features of an open and unashamed free-love movement, but he was equally anxious to abstain from interference with legitimate freedom of speech.

Or to put it another way, the Public Prosecutor realised that in the climate of 1897 no jury would convict anyone of obscene libel on the strength of Dawson's lecture or the "daring" articles printed in such a piddling magazine as *The Adult.* Something far more outrageous was needed; and that something was indicated by Dawson's reference to the "marvellous book by Havelock Ellis."

SCOTLAND YARD, at this stage, was not interested primarily in suppressing *Sexual Inversion* or prosecuting Havelock Ellis and his publisher for obscene libel. They wanted to smash the Legitimation League by scaring the daylights out of George Bedborough.

Providentially Scotland Yard received a complaint from Liverpool. A young man had sent half a crown to the Watford University Press requesting a copy of Geoffrey Mortimer's *The Blight of Respectability*, essential reading for any bright Liverpudlian facing the turn of the century. Instead he received a copy of *Sexual Inversion,* price ten shillings. This the young man may have considered a bargain, but it was seized by his parents, who demanded the suppression of such obscenity. Sweeney was instructed to buy a copy from Bedborough and a warrant for his arrest was applied for. Scotland Yard was "convinced that we should at one blow kill a growing evil in the shape of a vigorous campaign of free love and Anarchism."

Sweeney had a shrewd idea of Bedborough's character. His immediate superior, Chief Inspector Melville, had fantasies of violent resistance and insisted on accompanying Sweeney with a posse of half a dozen men within call. Bedborough was just leaving 16 John Street in the company of Miss Lillian Harman and an American anarchist poet. He saw Sweeney and went over to greet him. Sweeney said he had a warrant for his arrest and introduced Chief Inspector Melville.

Bedborough, certain that the whole thing was a nonsense which could easily be explained, got into a hansom with the two detectives and drove to Bow Street, gaily chatting. It was not until he was told that he would be held without bail that he realised that this was not a mistake but a concerted plot. He was told that he might communicate his situation to some friend; and he picked on Henry Seymour, who sixteen years before had obeyed Bradlaugh's instructions and pleaded guilty to posting an obscene libel in Tunbridge Wells. He was now an Anarchist and spoiling for an opportunity to display the

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courage and resolution that G. W. Foote had accused him of lacking on that occasion.

THE NEWS TOOK Seymour's breath away. He had never read *Sexual Inversion*, but he "knew that Havelock Ellis was a man of very high intellectual and moral attainments and it was perfectly certain that the book could be defended by any person competent to do so."[6]

Seymour immediately secured details of the arrest and next morning saw Bedborough at Holloway jail and promised his full support in securing bail and rallying sympathisers for his defence. He wrote hundreds of letters not merely to those immediately connected with the Legitimation League but also to anyone who would support the Free Press Defence Committee, as he tactfully called it. He roped in those rival martyrs, Holyoake and Foote, though they had scarcely been on speaking terms for years and both regarded homosexuality as something no freethinker would think of. He enlisted Robert Buchanan the poet, Herbert Burrows the socialist, Walter Crane the artist, Messrs Jaggard the publishers, R. Braithwaite, barrister-at-law, not to mention Edward Carpenter and George Bernard Shaw.

ON THE DAY of Bedborough's arrest, Havelock Ellis was alone at Carbis Bay. Edith had gone north to stay with Claire. First came a telegram from Lillian Harman, unknown to Ellis except by repute, reporting Bedborough's arrest. This was hotly followed by a second from Dr de Villiers, which added that he had been privately informed that Ellis was also to be arrested. On behalf of Mr George Astor Singer, he authorised Ellis to engage counsel on his own and the University Press's behalf. He, de Villiers, had unfortunately been called away indefinitely to Cologne on urgent business.

Havelock and Edith had not been getting on well with one another; but the moment that she heard, Edith wrote "You poor old love. Never mind, I'll stick to you and help you, and I'm at least *glad* to come home to you. We'll live in England and spit at them. Two together can pull a boat that else would sink. Your own wifie. Here is a cheque for £2."[7]

C. O. Humphreys, Wilde's solicitors, were chosen by Ellis to represent himself and de Villiers. Seymour, for the Free Press Defence Committee, engaged a Mr Wyatt Digby on Bedborough's behalf. Both parties agreed on counsel, Mr Horace Avory, who had appeared for the prosecution in the Wilde Trial.

THE AIM OF THE DEFENCE was to divert the prosecution from Bedborough who had merely sold *Sexual Inversion* to Havelock Ellis who had written it. On 7 June, Humphreys announced that Dr Havelock Ellis was quite prepared to accept all the responsibilities of authorship for the incriminated book. The case would have been stronger still if de Villiers had appeared to give the same undertaking as publisher.

As it was, the prosecution, whether through ignorance or by design, maintained the belief that Bedborough was the publisher of *Sexual Inversion*. They further complicated the issue by adding ten further charges: one for selling Oswald Dawson's Lecture on The Outcome of Legitimation; a second for selling a copy of *The Adult*, when it was still edited by Dawson; and eight more for articles in numbers of *The Adult* edited by Bedborough himself. There were, that is to say, three charges against Bedborough for merely selling and eight for publishing and selling allegedly obscene libels.

At the adjourned hearing on 21 June, Mr Horace Avory told Sir John Bridge, the presiding magistrate, that the prisoner was prepared to contend that the works put into evidence, particularly *Sexual Inversion*, which formed the subject of the prosecution, were not obscene. Sir John interrupted. "Are *you* prepared to contend that for him?" Mr Avory replied, "I don't think you ought to put that question to me, Sir John, but as you have put it, I answer 'Yes'. I shall be prepared to maintain that this is not an obscene publication, but a scientific work, if it be approached as it should be—by persons of a scientific mind and desire to learn."

The Prosecution knew that if Mr Avory persisted in that line he stood a good chance

[6] *The Adult*, July 1898. Seymour took over the editorship from Bedborough. Because it reported all the details of the Bedborough case, the July number sold out, and by reprinting it Seymour turned his profit into a loss. He printed a much larger edition of the August number, which many distributors would not handle for fear of prosecution. Though these and subsequent numbers made losses which Seymour met out of his own pocket, they provide a wonderful blow-by-blow account of the five months the contest lasted.

[7] Quoted in *My Life*. Perhaps one reason why Edith was unhappy was that she seldom felt Havelock needed her.

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of securing even from a common jury an acquittal for *Sexual Inversion*: and the other piffling charges would be dismissed. Sweeney set to work on softening up his young friend Bedborough. He had the field to himself. Though Ellis and Bedborough were in this affair together, neither Havelock nor Edith made any attempt to meet George and Louie Bedborough and sympathise with them in the ordeal which they were undergoing. As for the Free Press Defence Committee, many of them made it quite clear that they were spoiling for a martyrdom. In the fight for the freedom of the press, it might be better if Bedborough went to jail.

Bedborough had been quite frank with Sweeney from the outset. He had met de Villiers first when he and Mrs Singer were living in Wembley. The girl Anna had been the maid. In June 1895, she had gone away to have a baby[8] and when she came back, she was accepted as Mrs Singer's niece. I do not know whether Bedborough suggested that de Villiers first became interested in The Legitimation League, because he wanted to remove the stigma of bastardy from Roland Villiers Singer, but we do know that de Villiers and his wife made wills, first in favour of each other and then of Anna's child.

At a later trial Bedborough gave evidence that Dr de Villiers let him the house at No 16 John Street and used it as a receiving address for letters addressed to Dr Sinclair. I think it reasonable that Sweeney elicited that information at this time. But Sweeney's first line of argument must certainly have been: "You talk about Dr de Villiers and the Watford University Press. Why doesn't he come forward to defend this book which you and he say is not pornography? How can we even believe in the existence of the 'Watford University Press', when no such firm exists in the Registry of Companies?"

The effect of Sweeney's pressure was that in July, six weeks after Bedborough's arrest, the University Press Limited, Watford was registered by a non-existent secretary, Gustave Perrier, with Roland de Villiers and six other non-existent shareholders each holding one out of a possible thousand £10 shares.

At the same time, to satisfy Bedborough and the Free Press Defence Committee (who acknowledged his financial contribution of fifty guineas to the fund but were sceptical at his absence), Dr de Villiers wrote a long letter to the Home Secretary (copies to the Commissioners of Police and the Press) of which this extract is a sample:

> The Commissioners of Police who charge a bookseller in London with selling *Sexual Inversion* to detectives *with intent to corrupt the morals of Her Majesty's subjects* are practically guilty of the very offence of which they accuse Mr Bedborough, as by their ill-advised act the book has been played into the hands of persons who otherwise would never have known of its existence.

De Villiers always tried to kill as many as possible birds with one stone. In his letter he suggested that the book might be of interest to Etonians and Harrovians and observed that he was only the literary adviser to the University Press, of whom our old non-existent friends Paul Grant Wilson and William Macmillan were respectively "printer" and "publisher."

ON THE SAME DAY that de Villiers wrote this letter, another was sent to booksellers and agents of *The Adult*:

> PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL
>
> *Criminal Investigation Department,*
> *Scotland Yard SW*
>
> Sir,
>
> The arrest and committal of Mr Bedborough should serve you as a warning. Take notice that the police will arrest and prosecute any bookseller who in the future should sell the atheistic and abominable publications of the University Press.
>
> *Yours truly,*
> A. CHRISTIAN.

Scotland Yard disclaimed the scurrilous letter. But local police, asked by an apprehensive bookseller if it would be a punishable offence to sell *The Adult*, answered honestly that nine out of the eleven charges preferred against Bedborough were for precisely that.

It was a pity that consequently the August number of *The Adult* was such a flop, because it contained a letter from George Bernard Shaw, the only member of the Free Press Defence Committee who had taken the trouble to read the book which was the cause of this complicated hoo-ha.

> *Dear Mr Seymour,*
>
> The prosecution of Mr Bedborough for selling Mr Havelock Ellis's book is a masterpiece of police stupidity and magisterial ignorance. I have read the book carefully; and I have no hesitation in saying that its publication was

[8] According to the birth certificate, on 2 June, 1895, at Rosewood, Pangbourne, Berks, a boy named Roland Villiers, son of George Singer, Captain in Merchant Service, was born to Anna Singer and the birth registered on June 19. Anna's usual alias was Anna von Jarchow.

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more urgently needed in England than any other recent treatise with which I am acquainted. Englishmen and Englishwomen are paying rates and taxes for the enforcement of the most abominably superstitious penal laws directed against the morbid idiosyncrasy with which the book deals. It is almost invariably assumed that this idiosyncrasy is necessarily associated with the most atrocious depravity of character; and this notion, for which there appears to be absolutely no foundation, is held to justify the infliction of penalties compared to which the punishment of a man who batters his wife to death is a trifle.

Yours faithfully,

G. BERNARD SHAW.[9]

Havelock Ellis, meanwhile, was unaware of the advocacy of Shaw, the pressures put on Bedborough by Scotland Yard on one side and the Free Press Defence Committee on the other. Edith, we know, thought de Villiers a coward to take refuge in Cologne. But Havelock Ellis was too engrossed in writing the second volume of *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* (The Evolution of Modesty and Autoerotism) to worry about the fortunes of his first. He was, he had decided, a scholar; and whether Dr de Villiers was really engaged on business in Cologne or lying doggo in Bushey was no concern of his.

THE LAW DRAGS ON and it is hard to keep enthusiasm at fever pitch. Indeed despite all the efforts of the Free Press Defence Committee, no meeting, however rousing, succeeded in drumming up more than £4. Mr Wyatt Digby became as worried about his own fees as about Mr Horace Avory's. The University Press had promised, in addition to an initial £50 for preliminary expenses, £150 for the trial itself. Digby was determined to get this before the Grand Jury at the Old Bailey returned a true bill. It was a terrible struggle. Digby was sure that de Villiers was a crook and de Villiers was equally sure that Digby was a crook. They were both right, but by visiting the Watford Press the day before the case came up at the Old Bailey, Digby wheedled the money out of "Mrs Singer."

In mid-September a true bill was found against George Bedborough in the terrifying terms laid out at the beginning of this piece.

Bedborough was appalled at the indictment and wondered how he could possibly escape from the prison sentence which Holyoake and Foote wanted him to serve. Havelock Ellis was equally appalled by the indictment and retreated even further into his scholastic reclusion. He started to write his famous pamphlet *A note on the Bedborough Trial* in which he announced,

To wrestle in the public arena for freedom of speech is a noble task which may worthily be undertaken by any man who can devote to it the best energies of his life. It is not, however, a task which I have ever contemplated. I am a student. The pursuit of the martyr's crown is not favourable to the critical and dispassionate investigation of complicated problems. I must leave to others the task of obtaining the reasonable freedom that I am unable to attain.

According to Sweeney, a copy of this was shown to Bedborough before the trial. Ellis did not type his work, so it is unlikely that a carbon would have reached Scotland Yard. It is inconceivable that Ellis would have supplied them with a transcript. So the advance proof came from the Watford University Press and was provided (*a*) by a police agent, (*b*) by one of the workmen, or (*c*) by de Villiers himself, or on his instructions. I favour the last theory for reasons which will become plain.

BEDBOROUGH had never met Havelock Ellis, but he believed that he was a man of integrity, deceived by de Villiers, a persuasive crook. He was alarmed at the martyr-enthusiasm which Henry Seymour had drummed up in the Free Press Defence Committee: and he was beguiled by the plausibility of Detective Inspector Sweeney, who argued very reasonably, "Why on earth take responsibility for a book which the publisher and the author are not prepared to defend? After all, there are eleven charges against you, eleven serious charges, but if you plead guilty to the first three, we will not proceed with the other eight, provided that you give assurance that you will never again have anything to do with the Legitimation League." That provision was all-important because according to the rules of the Legitimation League the secretary had to call any meeting which would supersede himself, and so The Legitimation League came to an end if Bedborough agreed to Sweeney's terms.

From Scotland Yard's point of view the solution was neat. But from that of the Free Press Defence Committee all was confusion. Their fund had been raised to prove that *Sexual Inversion* was not an obscene libel. Not a penny of it could go to Mr Horace Avory, or for that matter to Mr Wyatt Digby,

[9] Shaw, though he felt no deep sympathy with Wilde, did all that he could to persuade him to avoid a trial and to alleviate his imprisonment.

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whose plea of guilty stigmatised *Sexual Inversion* as an obscene libel, without it ever being considered by a judge or jury.

Detective Inspector Sweeney congratulated himself. Nice Mr Bedborough was bound over. The Legitimation League was smashed. *The Adult* came to an end. A warrant was taken out against Dr de Villiers if he ever dared to return to the country (which he had never left), and an assurance had been given by Havelock Ellis that he would never again publish his sex books in Britain.

Under the circumstances Bedborough's plea of guilty to the first three charges is understandable. Why should he fight a battle which Havelock Ellis himself confessed that he was not prepared to fight? Bedborough admitted that he was a coward, but was he any more cowardly, he asked, than many members of the Free Press Defence Committee, who stood on the sidelines exhorting him to martyrdom? What is not understandable is Bedborough's indignation that Mr Horace Avory, who had been briefed to defend him against the charge of publishing an obscene libel in *Sexual Inversion*, should not appear when he pleaded guilty. His sense of reality had clearly collapsed under the months of strain.

Mr Wyatt Digby misappropriated all the defence funds on which he had managed to lay his hands, was investigated by the Law Society, and struck off the rolls. But the Free Press Defence Committee still held some funds and in the final number of *The Adult*, Henry Seymour expressed the hope that Dr de Villiers would come forward to receive the warrant and that the scientific value of *Sexual Inversion* could thus be proven in a court of law. Havelock Ellis astonishingly did not support Mr Seymour. Perhaps having thrown up the sponge himself, he considered that he could not demand that de Villiers should enter the ring.

IN THE ACCOUNTS which Ellis printed, he appears as a persecuted scholar victimised by society and even by those who should have been his friends. Massingham, editor of the *Daily Chronicle*, had promised to write about the scientific value of *Sexual Inversion* when the case was no longer *sub judice*. After Bedborough was bound over, Ellis hastened to the *Chronicle* offices, expecting at least a display of indignation. But Massingham fobbed him off with his secretary and printed a leader next day acknowledging Ellis' "scientific intentions", but stigmatising the book as "a highly morbid production" and "worthless as science even if the science it professes to advance were worth studying." It was the inevitable Fleet Street reaction to Bedborough's plea of guilty: and Ellis' anger should have been directed against de Villiers.

As well as publishing Ellis' *A Note on the Bedborough Case* the University Press, Watford, produced a hefty double-barrelled attack on the case. The first barrel, *Darwin on Trial at the Old Bailey*, was attributed to "Democritus", the pen name de Villiers used as editor of *The University Magazine;* the second, *Judicial Scandals and Errors*, was attributed to G. Astor Singer, M.A. and was a tendentious account of the history of the Bedborough case, designed to establish that Dr de Villiers was not the publisher of *Sexual Inversion* but had merely acted as literary adviser. The arch-villain of the piece was George Bedborough, whose real name, revealed Mr Singer, was Higgs![10] Ellis makes no mention of *Judicial Scandals and Errors*, so we do not know whether he approved or even read it. But he made an agreement with de Villiers, either by post or in person, that henceforward *The Psychology of Sex* should be published not in Watford but in Leipzig; and handed over to him his second volume, on the Evolution of Modesty, Autoerotism etc.

Advertisements for the *Studies* read: "The University Press is compelled to print these volumes on the Continent, but orders can be sent to Watford for transmission abroad. Prompt attention is given to orders."

Just how prompt the attention was, Dr Beale, Government medical referee for London, informed the police. On 4 December 1899 he wrote to Watford for *The Psychology of Sex, Volume Two*. He received it two days later.

On 20 December the police raided the University Press, Watford, and seized 486 copies of *The Psychology of Sex*. The directors were summonsed to show cause why they should not be destroyed. C. O. Humphreys again represented the University Press, but instead of appearing in person, de Villiers wrote from Paris:

> The seizure has caused hearty laughter all over France and Germany, as it seems that England is anxious to make up for her defeats in the Transvaal by victorious attacks on scientific prints.

[10] Bedborough may have abandoned the name of Higgs, because of its lack of euphony. But it is equally possible that he did not want to embarrass his clergyman father by his unconventional views on free love.

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"In view of my declaration, I was being put in a false and unpleasant position," wrote Ellis in *My Life*. "I was in doubt what course to take." It is hard to see why. Even if de Villiers was not simply substituting a Leipzig for a Watford imprint, he had broken his contract, rejected the opportunity of defending the scientific value of the work and made Ellis appear a liar. Ellis had only to withdraw de Villiers' licence to publish. He had little to lose, because he had already secured Krafft—Ebing's publishers, the F. A. Davis Company of Philadelphia, who could handle world English rights as they did subsequently. What little he lost financially, he would make up in self-respect.

WHAT MOVED ELLIS to continue the association with de Villiers when once again he had been exposed as a crook, and this time publicly, is impossible to determine. Did the bold author of *Sexual Inversion* lack the moral courage to stand up to the cat-like Rhinelander? Was he so obsessed with his sacred vocation as a sexologist that he welcomed the circulation of his *magnum opus* even as a work of pornography? Was he so withdrawn from other people that he understood de Villiers as little as he did his wife? Was he so confused by his New Morality that he could not recognise an old-fashioned crook? Or was it once again just a case of that slow reaction that took him fourteen months to feel jealous of Claire and nearly two years to take his affair with Amy further than a kiss?

In *My Life* Ellis went out of his way to hide what happened, to telescope time and so confuse events that he emerged with all the glory of a major prophet, not without honour save in his own country. The true story is more complex and more interesting.

AFTER THE POLICE RAID, the University Press removed from Watford to Broad Street Buildings in the City of London. The company returns of 28 November 1898 show Dr Roland de Villiers at 49 Brabanterstrasse, Cologne. The full share issue of 1000 £10 shares has been taken up, but of these Dr de Villiers has only a modest 45, compared with Wilson and Macmillan (100 each) and George Astor Singer of 97 Fifth Avenue, New York (750). In the following year Dr de Villiers is still in Cologne, but at a different address. The move to 2 Broad Street Buildings was notified by Gustave Perrier, Secretary, on 30 May 1900. Within three weeks Inspector Wills of the City Police, thinly disguised under the alias of Walter Willard, paid his first call. He was received by Allan Laidlaw, a down-at-heel journalist in his middle forties, who had written books and articles for de Villiers but was grateful to be employed at 30s a week. Laidlaw had received instructions. "Be suspicious of every stranger! If asked where the 'manager' is, say he's out."

Laidlaw showed Wills the stock. There were no copies of *The Psychology of Sex*. Owing to the action of the authorities, Laidlaw explained, they had to keep them in Leipzig, Paris and Cologne. But he could take an order. He sold the inspector for six shillings a book "which contains some very plain speaking"[11] and gave him a list of publications.

Inspector Wills did not return until May 1901. Laidlaw's performance had been impeccable; and though the University Press had used the public mail to circularise clergymen, not all of whom were interested in sex books, there had been nothing to infer that the University Press was breaking the law. His visit was due to something which had made the authorities far more interested in Dr de Villiers than as a peddler of scientific pornography. In March of that year, the Brandy Distillers Company, which also had offices in 2 Broad Street Buildings, had gone into compulsory liquidation. The Brandy Distillers Company had been registered in February, 1891, with an authorised capital of £5,000 in £1 shares, of which only seven were taken up. Two years later a special resolution was passed and confirmed converting the shares into "Share Warrants to Bearer." A few months later the authorised capital was increased to £30,000. The company did nothing except pay a high interest to shareholders out of the capital subscribed and by March 1901 it had reached its limit of profitability.

This type of bogus company flourished in those days and was not so very different from dozens of others, except that the witness to the seven original shareholders was C. F. von Weissenfeld. The name rang a bell in Scotland Yard. George Ferdinand Springmühl von Weissenfeld had been born in Germany, the son of an eminent judge. He matriculated at Giessen and obtained first-class honours in science, medicine, and literature. He married a German woman of good birth, but became estranged from his father and escaped from the country after forging and uttering cheques and negotiable securities. He settled in Britain under his own name in 1880 and made his

[11] *Cambridge Daily News*, 24 January 1902.

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living sharply until he was hauled up at the police court and given 12 months hard labour. When he left prison he and his wife disappeared to surface again as Mr and Mrs Wild. In 1885 he successfully bankrupted himself and disappeared before the warrant for his arrest could be served. In 1885 he started the Concentrated Produce Company Ltd, still using part of his name, Ferdinand Springmühl, but inventing a host of imaginary shareholders before creating "Share Warrants to Bearer" and going into compulsory liquidation to the tune of over £14,000.

The penny dropped. Dr de Villiers, the publisher of *The Psychology of Sex,* was George Ferdinand Springmühl von Weissenfeld, wanted for years by Scotland Yard. Inspector Wills of the City Police was reinforced by Detective-Sergeant Badcock of Scotland Yard, who made no effort to buy sexy books but kept a watch upon the office.

John Sweeney's ghost-writer allowed his imagination to run riot about the last days of de Villiers, whose hide-out in England was unknown, since Mrs Singer had given up the house in Bushey Heath.[12] He invented a wonderful story of de Villiers journeying to London as a respectable city gentleman and changing in the lavatory into the dress of an old lady. The truth was simpler. Anna was the go-between. She was elusive. Badcock saw her come out of Broad Street Buildings and followed her through various city streets to Liverpool Street station, where she entered so many places that he finally lost sight of her. He was more successful the second time. Just as the 11.35 train was leaving Liverpool Street, she hurried through the barrier and boarded the train, immediately afterwards looking out to see if she was followed. Badcock also caught the train and followed her when she got out at Cambridge. A dog cart was waiting for her and the detective, discreetly hidden in a cab, followed her to a large house called Edenfield, in Trumpington Road. Miss Anna von Jarchow, alias Mrs Anna Singer, went into the house and Sergeant Badcock drove on to see Chief Constable Holland at Cambridge Police Station to report his belief that Edenfield was the residence of Dr George Ferdinand Springmühl von Weissenfeld, alias Betts, alias Davies, alias Grant, alias Macmillan, alias M'Corquodale, alias Perrier, alias von Jarchow, alias Weller, alias Wild, alias Willing, alias Wilson, alias Winter *u.s.w.*

The names of the occupants of Edenfield were Dr Roland Sinclair Roland, Mrs Ella Sinclair Roland, Miss Anna Sinclair[13] and a little boy aged six. The description of the ménage tallied and even the name Roland had been anticipated on the birth certificate of Anna's baby.

THE RAID TOOK PLACE on 14 January 1902, a combined operation concerted by Inspector Harrow of New Scotland Yard, Chief Constable Holland of Cambridge Borough and Superintendent Webb of the County Police. In company with Sergeant Badcock and other officers, they went to Edenfield at 10.20 a.m. Harrow and Holland went to the door and rang the bell. Anna opened it and Holland handed her his card saying that they would like to have a few minutes conversation with Dr Sinclair Roland. "He's not in," she said, "he's gone to town."

"Is Mrs Roland in?"

"She is in, but you can't see her."

They stepped into the hall and Harrow said, "We are police officers; we hold a warrant for the arrest of Dr Sinclair Roland and Mrs Roland and you."

"What is it for?"

"Where is Mrs Sinclair Roland?"

When Harrow said they must see her, Anna shouted "Mamma!" and there were sounds higher in the house.

Anna took them from room to room, pretending to look for "Mamma", but when it was plain she was playing for time, Harrow left her with Holland and went upstairs. In a servant's bedroom at the top of the house he found a woman whom he recognised as Mrs Roland. She was at an open chest of drawers and in the middle of putting on a black skirt. When he said, "You are Mrs Sinclair Roland?" she answered, "No, I am Mrs Tipton the housekeeper." Like Anna, she maintained that Dr Roland was out, in town.

The two women were detained in the dining room, while Harrow and the others searched the grounds and house without any success. One thing they noticed, however, was that his boots were in the bedroom but his house slippers were missing. From enquiries they had made about their former house in Bushey (Powis Lodge, renamed by them

[12] Knowing that his correspondence to Laidlaw would be tapped by the police, de Villiers never wrote him except from Cologne.

[13] The age given by Anna when she appeared in court was 20, which if true means that she was 13, three years below the age of consent, when de Villiers seduced her.

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Singer's Castle[14]) the police knew that de Villiers had constructed a number of secret closets as well as escape routes. Edenfield was surrounded on all sides, so despatching the women to the police station, they began an intensive search, taking up the carpets, moving the furniture and tapping walls.

In the billiard room, they noticed a rather inappropriate article of furniture, a large covered-in walnut washstand. It moved easily on castors and behind it was a small door in the wall near the fireplace. Harrow shouted "Dr Sinclair Roland, you are hiding here. The game is up; you might as well come out." When there was no answer, they broke open the door, which was securely locked. Inside was a partition, as if it was a false cupboard. This was on hinges, but behind it were two large laundry baskets, very heavy.

While they were shifting these, they heard noises of someone moving beyond, as if trying to break out. They blew a whistle and told one of the constables in the grounds to watch the roof. By this time Sergeant Badcock had returned from taking the two women to the police station. The noise went on and they went into another room, where they found another door behind a chest of drawers. They broke that open and there in the darkness under the false ceiling they saw a man standing some distance away. Badcock rushed him and brought him out into the room. The man began to struggle like a madman, but Badcock and Holland held him, while Harrow tried to calm him down. When he became quieter, they took him down to the dining room, where he asked for a glass of water. (He had been in hiding for some three hours.) Harrow read the warrant and asked him if he understood it. He nodded and said, "I say nothing."

While Holland and Harrow remained behind to continue their search of the house, Badcock and a constable took their prisoner in a brougham to the Borough Police Station.

When he stepped out of the brougham, the prisoner appeared to have a fit. Badcock helped him into the office, and asked him if he wanted to see a doctor. He said, "No. I feel all right." But another fit took him and a doctor was called, who arrived five minutes later. Within half an hour, he was dead.

THIS ACCOUNT is taken from the report of the Inquest in the *Cambridge Daily News*, 16 January 1902. The account given by Sweeney and followed by Havelock Ellis and others is embroidered with picturesque details, such as de Villiers brandishing a pistol and using the glass of water to swallow the contents of a poison ring. There is no reason to question the verdict of the surgeon who performed the autopsy, Death by apoplexy.

IF "DE VILLIERS" HAD LIVED, there would have been a spectacular trial, in the course of which Havelock Ellis would have been exposed if not as an accessory, at least as gullible to the point of criminal imbecility. As it was, the prosecution was an anti-climax. Six accomplices were charged, Mrs Ella Sinclair Roland, alias Singer, 42, Anna Sinclair, alias Anna von Jarchow, aged 20, Allan Laidlaw, 47, journalist, Charles Maurice Coleman, 31, printer; and two subordinates Edward Henry Coleman, 45, and Walter Douglas Munday, 25, whose only offence was to have printed catalogues of University Press books. Thirty thousand books were discovered hidden, some at Edenfield, others in a London depot; among them were several thousand copies of the two volumes of *The Psychology of Sex*. All the accused pleaded guilty, except for Munday against whom the case was dismissed. Mrs Sinclair Roland was sentenced to nine months hard labour, Allan Laidlaw and Charles Coleman to six months hard labour, while Edward Coleman was required to find sureties, which were immediately forthcoming. The jury returned a strong recommendation of mercy in the case of Anna. The Common Serjeant sentenced her to one month's imprisonment, but when in the words of the *News of the World*, April 13, she "fell in a dead swoon in the dock", the Common Serjeant cancelled the sentence and bound her over in her own recognizances.

HAVELOCK ELLIS GIVES the impression in *My Life* that he did not publish the first two volumes of *The Psychology of Sex* with the F. A. Davis Company until after the death of de Villiers. This is not true. It is true that the books would not have achieved the notoriety or the sales that they did, if it had not been for the Bedborough case and the subsequent destruction of thousands of copies of the University Press edition on two separate occasions. The book would have circulated among a small, intelligent and discriminating reading public, who might within a decade or two have achieved the reform of the homosexual laws which was Ellis's primary public purpose

[14] Subsequent testimony revealed that when letters were addressed to the Baroness Singer, presumably by de Villiers or customers, they were forwarded to 2 Broad Street Buildings.

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in writing *Sexual Inversion*. Its being peddled by Charing Cross Road rubber shops as a pornographic work[15] probably did more than any single action to postpone the admirable reforms that Ellis advocated. It was not until 1954 that the Wolfenden committee reported in terms very similar to Ellis', and not till 1967 that, with the blessing of the Church of England, the advocacy conspicuously of Lord Arran and Lord Boothby in the Upper House and Messrs Leo Abse and Humphry Berkeley in the Lower, the Sexual Offences Act was finally passed. In the intervening seventy years, it is impossible to enumerate the full roster of those who like General Sir Hector Macdonald blew his brains out in a Paris hotel or like Lord Harcourt took an overdose of sleeping tablets to avoid the accusation of, or arrest for, homosexuality.[16] Nor can we tell the innumerable more whose lives were distorted by guilt, fear, blackmail and loss of employment through the labouchere clause.

Ellis was the first and boldest challenger of the slipshod Labouchere amendment passed rapidly through a sleepy House of Commons on a hot August evening. But reformers should have the courage of their convictions and the determination and subtlety necessary to carry through to the end the measures they envisage. Though George Bedborough Higgs confessed he was a coward at the time, it was the consistent cowardice of Havelock Ellis at every stage after he had finished his bold book that turned a blow for homosexual freedom into one against it.

In 1926, Isaac Goldberg wrote a book about Havelock Ellis, in which he repeated the inaccuracies of John Sweeney and Ellis himself. But he obtained a statement from George Bedborough Higgs, written 1 December 1925. Higgs makes no mention of the evidence which he gave in 1902, which helped to secure the conviction of, let us call them, Ella Sinclair Roland and Anna Sinclair. After the end of his case he "went abroad accepting an engagement of a teacher and lecturer in a German college." He maintained that his plea of "guilty" to the charge of selling *Sexual Inversion* had always been accepted by his friends, including Havelock Ellis, as perfectly honourable and reasonable, "although the decision had certain unforeseen results". He was primarily interested in "free marriage and divorce agitation" and though the Legitimation League folded up, he felt "the movement for which he primarily stood had won a real victory. This victory was none the less genuine because its importance was hidden in the general indignation against the condemnation of H.E.'s important work."

This, of course, was face-saving nonsense. But it was no more nonsensical than Ellis' boast in *My Life* that the God in whom he did not believe had killed first the Recorder of London in the prime of his life, then "many others" unspecified, and finally de Villiers, all because of their attitude to *Sexual Inversion*.

THE CENTURY which had begun with William Hone's gallant defence of political satire against the ludicrous charge of blasphemy, which had continued with Richard Carlile's pleading with his incarcerated body the cause of freedom which he had not the wit to win with words, with George Jacob Holyoake pretending to an atheism in which he did not believe out of sympathy for Charles Southwell, and George William Foote to further his ambition provoking martyrdom by reprinting the blasphemous obscenities of Leo Taxil, ended with a brace of cowards coupled to a rogue, all laying claim to martyrs' crowns without the suffering. *Autres temps, autres martyres.*

And yet, though this account serves to deflate the myths of secular hagiographers and with the benefit of hindsight to show how these benefactors of mankind might have been more effective if they had been subtler, it has not been my intention to minimise their achievements. The liberties we now enjoy are the result of their obstinate and frequently wrong-headed conflicts with authorities, secular and religious, equally obstinate and often more wrong-headed. If my heart had not been on their side, I would not have written so critically about their methods. They have triumphed in the end. But I wonder whether (it is in any case my hope), after the conflicts which have been so violent that the conservative elements accuse the progressive of being lewd, blasphemous, and obscene—and the progressive elements regard themselves as latter-day saints, and early Christians (all the better for not believing in God)—there might not be an end one day soon to the pernicious habits of self-righteous attitudinising.

The last words belong to Havelock Ellis himself, who had a prophetic vein which transcended all his tortured tergiversations.

> See what happens to those who, as the men of the old days put it, fight against God. They blindly achieve the exact opposite of that which they vainly imagine they have accomplished.

[15] In 1957, when I wanted to buy one volume missing from my series I was charged £1, "ten shillings back, when you've used it."

[16] See *The Other Love*, J. Montgomery Hyde, (Heinemann, 1970).

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Column

IT WOULD BE interesting, I think, to conduct a public opinion poll on how different people react to the phrase "Permissive Society." The result might be surprising, though in the case of certain individuals and certain groups, the response would be absolutely predictable. Only the pollsters would, I think, have to take even more trouble than usual in framing their questions. For the phrase has by now, in a surprisingly short space of time, established itself firmly in common usage and has become almost indispensable in public debate and controversy, so that we have only ourselves to blame, it would seem, if we do not know what it means. Yet at the same time it has acquired so many different associations and connotations that to different people it means entirely different things. On some people, it has the same kind of effect as the word "Culture" had on Hermann Goering; they reach for their revolver. Mr Roy Jenkins would equate "permissive" with "tolerant," and for the "permissive" would read the "civilised" society. In yet others the phrase conjures up visions of a Golden Age in which men and women, released from their ancient bondage to oppression and repression, walk naked in a paradise regained by kind permission of Mr Kenneth Tynan.

When a word carries so many contradictory associations, it is in danger of ceasing to serve any purpose as a means of communication and degenerating into a noise in the street. In the case of "Permissive Society," perhaps, this is particularly so, because it overlaps, as it were, with other phrases which have hardly less emotive effects. How, for instance, is the "Permissive" related to the "Affluent" or the "Consumer" Society, and how are any or all of these connected with "The Establishment," or its more recently invented antibody, "The Underground"? Such questions are all the more difficult to answer because one has the feeling that phrases of this kind have by now acquired an independent existence of their own and are used without reference to any corresponding reality; or rather, they are used in such a way as to persuade us that, because the Word exists, the Thing must too. They are our modern equivalents of Bacon's *idola fori*, the idols (or errors) of the market place, erected to the worship of words and phrases.

★

AS REGARDS "The Permissive Society", our compiler might find a valuable guide to usage in Mr John Selwyn Gummer's recently published book on that subject and under that title;[1] all the more valuable perhaps because Mr Gummer's sub-title, *Fact or Fantasy?*, seems to indicate a certain degree of healthy scepticism about the whole subject. His confidence will be increased because Mr Gummer is very well equipped for his task. For one thing, he is just the right age, which is thirty-two. Younger, he might have felt that the whole thing was a typically boring obsession of his elders; older, that it was simply an invention of the young. Mr Gummer is also a Member of Parliament (Conservative), a practising Christian, a publisher, and an adviser to the BBC; that is to say, he is thoroughly familiar with all those fields of discourse in which "Permissive Society" plays so large a part.

I do not mean it as any criticism of Mr Gummer that, given his qualifications, his reaction to the Permissive Society is entirely predictable; like Calvin Coolidge's clergyman and Sin, he is against it. But this is less important than that he should have tried to give us an objective survey of what people actually mean by the phrase and to what features in our contemporary way of life it can reasonably be held to apply. He makes the useful point that, as regards our society as a whole, the adjective *permissive* is strictly a misnomer. In a limited field, its use may be justified; but in other, and far more extensive ones, it is probably true to say that we live in a much more restrictive society than any which our forefathers ever knew. No doubt, this is largely due to the immensely increased power and authority of the modern state, and also of the modern corporation and its counterpart, the modern trade union. But it is also due to the growth of a social conscience which demands that, in innumerable matters affecting his daily life, the individual should submit to a vast and intricate body of law and regulation designed to protect and advance not only his own interests but those of his fellow men.

Taken together, such developments impose limitations on the individual's freedom of action which our grandfathers would have found intolerable. Perhaps this may explain

[1] *Cassell*, £2.25.

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why a society which is so frequently described as permissive is by large numbers of people found to be unbearably oppressive, in particular by the young, who are generally thought to be the chief beneficiaries (Mr Gummer might say victims) of its permissiveness. Perhaps, indeed, the permissiveness which society exhibits in certain spheres in our own day plays the part of the bread and circuses of the Roman Empire; it is the palliative with which Caesar buys the continuance of his own authoritarian rule.

Such a view, indeed, seems to fit the facts of the case rather better than Mr Gummer's, for whom permissiveness constitutes a subversive force which must be repressed or contained at all costs. One always finds it difficult to regard the most prominent proponents of permissiveness, like Mr Tynan or Miss Brigid Brophy or Dr Timothy Leary or Dr John Robinson, as the revolutionary spokesmen of a Brave New World which they have called in to redress the balance of the old; to take them, that is to say, as seriously as they (and Mr Gummer) take themselves. Were ever revolutionaries so well rewarded and esteemed? It is however only too easy to see them as society's licensed clowns and buffoons, its entertainment managers staging the modern equivalent of those gladiatorial shows which, by satisfying the Roman populace's blood lust, diverted it from the person of their oppressors. Where the Roman ring-master offered blood, Mr Tynan and Miss Brophy offer masturbation, perversion, and pornography. I must confess that, if forced to choose, I would prefer the latter; but I do not find the choice very appetising.

THE ROMAN POPULACE, however, formed only a small proportion of the population of the Empire. Bread and circuses were not available to all. In the same way, in our own society, it is its restrictiveness, patiently and stoically endured, or apathetically accepted, which is its most obvious feature. For most people, the permissive Paradise does not exist outside the pages of the *News of the World* and they cannot even afford to go and see *Oh! Calcutta!*

How far, then, does the Permissive Society actually exist; how far, as Mr Gummer asks, is it fact or is it fantasy? Mr Gummer does not give a very satisfactory answer to this question; he tends to think its evils are facts and its benefits fantasy. He is more successful in identifying those areas of our society to which the adjective *permissive* may reasonably be held to apply; he provides us as it were with a map of the permissive society, and for this we should be grateful. At least, we feel, we know where we are, even if the landscape it presents is not a very appealing one, nor does it bear much resemblance to the country in which most people live their lives. In this country, the individual is stripped of all, or nearly all, of those social, political, economic and moral relationships which elsewhere constitute so much of his life and is reduced to an abstraction from which everything is excluded except his sexuality, his repressions, and his fantasies.

The most prominent features of this society, according to Mr Gummer, are Sexual Promiscuity, Abortion, Drugs, Pornography, Venereal Disease, Perversion, and Violence. These, he thinks, form the permissive syndrome whose symptoms are evident in literature, on television, in the theatre and the cinema, in the press and most of all in the advertising industry which exercises a dominant influence on our present-day culture. The influence of such media is all the more powerful because, today, it meets with no resistance from religion; according to Mr Gummer, the Church has not merely abdicated from its position as the trustee of values and words, but in many cases has joined hands with Satan, so that what he calls the *Lilac Establishment,* which forms the ruling class of the Permissive Society, also includes leaders of the Church.

This, though by now a familiar, is also a formidable indictment, and in some areas at least (as, for instance, Drugs, Venereal Disease and Abortion) Mr Gummer is able to produce sufficient facts and figures to show that it is not a fanciful one. Indeed, in his own view the Permissive Society constitutes a mortal threat to all our existing institutions, more especially because it is the young who make themselves most comfortably at home in it.

It is to Mr Gummer's credit that he tries to define exactly what constitutes the threat. In all the characteristic features of the Permissive Society, whether in sexual promiscuity or drugs or abortion, he finds a common quality, which is that they degrade, debase, or in some cases destroy the individual, and this he believes amounts to a rejection of the fundamental assumptions on which Western society is based. For that society is essentially a "Judaeo-Christian" one, which is characterised above all by a belief in the sacredness of human life and the unique value of the individual. Therefore anything which tends to discredit that assumption inflicts a mortal wound at society's most vital and most vulnerable point.

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Mr Gummer makes this assertion as if it were self-evidently true; all history, he feels, goes to prove it. Yet perhaps history is not Mr Gummer's strongest point, even though he studied it at Oxford. One might reasonably point out that there have been several episodes in the history of Western civilisation which, at the very least, throw serious doubt on his view. Perhaps the best that one could say of his reading of history is that, even though it were not true, one wishes that it were; but this is something rather different.

What is perhaps more interesting is the conclusion which he draws from his view of history; for it provides him with a kind of all-purpose weapon with which to combat the dangers of permissiveness, and no doubt it will be eagerly seized on by others who take those dangers as seriously as he does. Every society, Mr Gummer thinks, has the right of self-preservation, and since permissiveness, as he defines it, strikes at the very roots of our "Judaeo-Christian" society, then we should, indeed we must, place the strictest limitations upon it if we are to survive, even though this may involve interference with the rights of the individual; for after all, is it not the individual whom, in the long run, society is protecting by doing so?

Mr Gummer argues, very reasonably, that by restricting any further extension of permissiveness, or by reducing the areas in which it has already conquered, society would not be behaving otherwise than it does in other matters. After all, society intervenes in innumerable other ways with the rights of individuals in order to protect their health, their working conditions, their environment, their livelihoods, indeed almost any aspect of their lives that is statistically measurable. Why should it be debarred from interfering in their private lives, especially since these may have effects of which others must bear the cost?

ONE CANNOT HELP feeling that in slaying one dragon, perhaps a sham one, Mr Gummer has perhaps conjured up others which are even worse; and equally, that he may have missed the real dragon after all. It is not in any sense true, and has not been during the present century at least, that we live in a "Judaeo-Christian" society, with all which that implies to Mr Gummer. Rather, we live in a society in which all values based on revelation have been continuously eroded under the scrutiny of scientific investigation, pursued in a spirit which is itself ethically neutral. For that reason, the mortal conflict which Mr Gummer postulates between the Permissive and the "Judaeo-Christian" society is largely a struggle between paper tigers.

In a curious way, Mr Gummer himself unconsciously bears testimony to this situation. The right of self-preservation which he claims for society is itself an ethically neutral one. It is an argument from force, not morality, and applies equally to all societies, whatever the particular values they embody. The only difference is that, having different values, they will have different enemies, but the *raison d'état* by which they are all inspired to go dragon-killing will in each case be the same. In this sense, a Communist society is as justified in silencing Solzhenitsyn as a Judaeo-Christian one would be in suppressing Miss Brigid Brophy. One could say that Mr Gummer's argument is not merely ethically neutral; it is a strictly immoral one.

If, in a society like ours, which for over four hundred years has been increasingly dominated by the scientific reason, there still remains a "permissive" section where society refrains from intervening, this is not because of a conflict, or confusion of values. It is simply because Science has not had time to get around to it yet, having more immediate tasks, like atomic fission, on hand. There are still areas of the psyche, of our personal and emotional lives, which, from the point of view of the scientific reason, remain very much of a mystery, and our sexual activities especially occupy a very large part of them. So long as they remain a mystery, society is more or less content, except for a few cries of hypocritical indignation, that we should do as we like in them. But it is doubtful whether this happy situation will last much longer.

Very recently, the eminent American behaviourist at Harvard, Professor B. F. Skinner, announced that we had progressed so far in our knowledge of animal behaviour, that the time had really come when society should cease to bother about the claims of individuals, who after all are nothing more than systems of automatic reflexes which we can now control and condition absolutely. I do not know what Mr Gummer would make of this kind of challenge to the values of his Judaeo-Christian society, but I am sure it is a very much more serious one than any form of permissiveness will ever achieve. When we live in, the skin stripped off us and all nerve endings exposed, the harsh white glare of Professor Skinner's investigations, the petulant protestations of Mr Tynan and Miss Brophy and all the others will sound like the twittering of bats in a dark yet still habitable cave.

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THEATRE

Stage Politics

By John Weightman

THERE ARE DAYS when I am dotty enough to think I am the only person in step and that all the other average pen-pushers have gone mad. For instance—to take first an example outside the theatre—how often have I read during the last fortnight that P. G. Wodehouse is a great writer and a great stylist? Judging by his appearances on television, he is a charming man, and he is certainly a fascinating case, but why do the critics not celebrate his 90th birthday by putting his work into perspective, instead of making such extraordinary statements? I remember that when Sir Noel Coward reached the age of seventy, there was a similar high fever, and I was made to feel that it was positively unpatriotic, and a definite case of *lèse-théâtre*, not to accept his latest plays as being unquestionably superb. I am not at all averse to singing "For he's a jolly good fellow"; being thoroughly sentimental, I can get tears in my eyes on the slightest pretext, but it is one thing to feel emotions and quite another to sort them out and classify them with some respect for their relative merit and validity. This is particularly difficult to do in the case of the theatre, where writers, producers and critics alike are affected by waves of hysteria. So often plays are just rag-bags of variegated emotions that have not been articulated in terms of any acceptable intellectual structure. Since I am, perhaps mistakenly, still in love with a certain idea of the theatre, I go on hoping that the dramatic framework, instead of operating haphazardly in its own silly way, will coincide with, and reinforce, the intellectual and emotional pattern. But I have been disappointed again in connection with two highly praised productions that are supposed to be dealing with political themes: the Théâtre du Soleil's now famous *1789*, transferred from Paris to the Round House for a short season, and Edward Bond's *Lear* at the Royal Court.

Both these theatrical events have been treated with considerable respect by the newspaper critics, and in order to say what I think about them, I am conscious of having to overcome some sort of inhibition. It is not merely that I dislike being in a minority of one, since the chances are that I am wrong; I also share what I take to be the basic assumptions of both productions. *1789* is generally Left-Wing, and *Lear* is trying to say something about man's inhumanity to man. Nevertheless, both strike me as incoherent and feeble pieces of work, which have been praised largely for what they are about, or claim to be about, not for what they are.

As Mr Irving Wardle explains in his preface to the "Programme-text" of *1789*, Mme Mnouchkine's company is one of those theatrical collectives, like the Living Theatre or the Bread and Puppet Theatre, which try to make theatre a total way of life. They are said to rule themselves democratically and to share their profits. Judging by the way they leaped about the five or six small trestle stages set around the Great O of the Round House, they are vital and dedicated. No doubt they all have fun together and love doing what they do. But the question at issue is the quality of their work and its political relevance. The only previous production by them I have seen was *Midsummer Night's Dream*, done on a vast carpet of goat-skins or cow-hides at the Cirque Medrano, and I could find little virtue in that. Because of the size of the areas, the characters had to intone their words and had to be moved about like chess-men, apart from Puck, who was able to roll down the slopes. The whole performance had a solemn abstractness which was perhaps inevitable in the circumstances but seem to be nearer to *L'Année dernière à Marienbad* than to Shakespeare.

1789 IS QUITE the opposite; it is a rumbustious series of sketches, backed up with music by Mahler, Beethoven, Bach, etc., and purporting to give the popular view of events in Paris during the first year of the Revolution. The actors mime the Flight to Varennes; Cagliostro dances wildly with Marie Antoinette and the King's mistresses; we see aristocrats behaving horribly and poor people having to strangle their children for lack of food; popular pressure forces Louis XVI to reinstate Necker; there is a shouted, unintelligible debate about the Rights of Man; the aristocrats in terror divest themselves of their clothes, representing their privileges; the populace rejoices at the fall of the Bastille but Lafayette asks for a return to order; the wicked bourgeois buy up *les biens de l'Eglise* and the good, virtuous common people are cheated of their glorious revolution.

On one level, the show is a strange jumble, and I cannot make out from the programme whether these are actual sketches that were performed in the streets and of which some record has been preserved, or whether they are *images d'Epinal* thought up by Mme Mnouchkine and her company as being plausible popular reactions at the time. Mr Wardle says she has "reworked" history. But

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why present, in a sort of Punch-and-Judy-show way, and in this order, these particular bits of the immensely complicated revolutionary scene? I was under the impression that Necker was reinstated in 1788 and that the Flight to Varennes took place in 1791, and I can't name a single mistress of Louis XVI off-hand; in fact, my recollection is that he wasn't a bit like his grandfather, Louis XV, and even had to have an operation before he could do his conjugal duty with Marie Antoinette. Why give such importance to Cagliostro, who was a minor symptom? Why, if post-1789 events are included, not give the September Massacres, the Feast of Reason, the execution of André Chénier, or a dozen other attractively theatrical episodes? Anyone who actually knows something about the Revolution can only be puzzled; anyone who doesn't will have his head stuffed with misconceptions.

On another level, of course, the purpose is clear. The upper classes are totally wicked; the people are totally good. *1789* turns out to be just another example of the old French bourgeois sport of bourgeois-bashing, disguised as a historical extravaganza. It allows the audience, if they are uninformed and simple-minded enough, to identify with the people as being virtuous and down-trodden and to feel morally indignant at their oppressors. But why, at this stage in the political game and after all the events of the last 200 years, reduce political reality to this childish simplification? This is just the Left-Wing, or the pseudo-Left-Wing, indulging in emotion about matters that require intellect. We all know that there is a sense in which class truths are not the same as individual truths, but this is not an excuse for wilfully confusing the issue. In later life, I have met many kindly upper-class English people who had no notion of the suffering involved in the General Strike; had civil war actually broken out in the 'twenties, I might well, as a small boy, have stoned some of them to death with glee, had I got the chance, and I would have been "right" to do so, because there are situations of stress in which cornered people have no choice but to work off their passion. But it would be pointless for me to nourish a grievance against them now, or to present the political problem of the General Strike as being a simple opposition between the wicked upper class and the oppressed working class. If the Round House put on a show about the General Strike, I would expect the passion to be brought in as one element, and an important one; but I would object to other people wallowing in it vicariously with a facile sense of virtue and the mistaken impression that they were being politically-minded, especially if the details had been deliberately arranged to produce a black-and-white effect. My guess is that if the Parisians of 1789 could be resurrected and brought to see Mme Mnouchkine's production, she might be startled by their comments.

I can see how a show like this can have a success in France, where romantic Leftism is endemic, particularly among the phoney Left (*le vison progressiste*, "progressive mink", as Ionesco calls them), and exceptionally strong after the long political vacuum of Gaullism, but I can only scratch my head in wonder when Mr Wardle, the dramatic critic of *The Times*, asserts that *1789* is "a work with the power to activate a mass social response" or that it can "mobilize mass heterogeneous audiences into a passionate civic unit", and when Mr Michael Kustow lyrically exclaims: "When *1789* opens in London, the Round House, that still-unconquered Bastille of people's theatre, may find its foundations shaken by this contagious performance of liberty, equality and fraternity". What I saw was a childish charade with one or two theatrical moments. It seems impossible that these two gentlemen should have simultaneously taken leave of their senses, and yet. . . .[1]

TO MOVE ON NOW to Mr Bond; he, I take it, is not a collectively-minded Left-Winger, like Mme Mnouchkine, but chiefly an anarchistic individualist in a state of almost complete despair about the modern world in

[1] Since writing this, I have attended the first hour and a half of a crowded discussion on *1789* at the French Institute (17 October). To my great relief, Mr Arnold Wesker put forward a point of view similar to my own, although the audience (mainly French, I think) was almost unanimously hostile to him. Mme Mnouchkine, a nice woman devoted to her company but of incredible intellectual naïvety, seemed incapable of even understanding his argument. People have been fair-minded long enough, she said; it is time we got back to simplifications. Dr Jonathan Miller blithely argued that since all truth is relative and a matter of focussing, the caricatural distortions of *1789* serve a purpose by stimulating discussion. I suppose he is too young for it to have occurred to him that Hitler's caricatural distortions, presented in the splendidly theatrical setting of the Nuremberg Rallies, could have been defended on the same ground, since the different ideological bias does not alter the principle. Hitler was a natural master of group propaganda theatre with audience participation; he certainly knew how to activate "mass social response."

I am told that the discussion lasted three and a half hours and that, towards the end, an excited

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all its aspects: politics, education, industrialism, commercial entertainment, etc. Included in the programme of *Lear* is a profession of faith, entitled *A Writer's Theatre,* from which I quote:

> . . . the whole world is an arsenal and becoming a slum. . . . In the past the problem was how to make the earth inhabitable, now it's how to make it bearable. . . . No one could quietly bear to live the sort of life we have to live now unless he'd been made morally insane, and this state is brought about by our education, and the enormous pressures to conform, possess and compete that threaten us all our lives, and above all by our dependence on an industrial ecology that is beyond our control and does not respond to any man's individual efforts, so that our sense of personal authority and power is rubbed out by the group.

In view of this, it is a little surprising that Mr Bond should have chosen to give aesthetic expression to his concern by "reworking" Shakespeare's *Lear,* as Mme Mnouchkine "reworks" history. The Shakespearian play deals with the eternal evil of human nature in an elemental, relatively primitive society, not corrupted at all by education, industrialism, or commercial entertainment. I heard Mr Bond being condescending about Shakespeare on television, because, he said, Shakespeare is reconciled to things in the end. This is like Shaw maintaining that Shakespeare "onions the handkerchief." I would have said, on the contrary, that Shakespeare has an absolutely clear sense of evil, which is not blurred at all by the fact that he is such a dab hand with the poetic phrase. Shaw objects to him because he is not a believer in the Shavian religion of the Life Force moving progressively towards better things. He could not be, because he preceded the birth of the idea of progress and the technological revolution. Mr Bond, I suspect, objects to him because behind the anarchistic individualist is a half-revolutionary who would like to think that evil is produced by society and could be eliminated from the world by rearrangement. The difference between Shaw and Mr Bond is that Shaw recoils from evil and will not contemplate it honestly (this is one of the factors that limit him, in spite of his exhilarating intelligence), whereas Mr Bond is fascinated with evil in some of its forms, and indeed seems to me to have a strong sadistic streak. I am taking the adjective in the historical sense; the Marquis de Sade was the most rigid contemplator of evil that Europe has had.

IF THE INCIDENTAL sadism is removed, Mr Bond's *Lear* is just a simplistic fable, set in some indefinite modern period. Lear is an autocrat who has built a wall to keep out his enemies, and he treats his people like slaves. His two wicked daughters, Bodice and Fontanelle, revolt against him and marry the neighbouring princes, his enemies, in order to usurp his kingdom. Lear is defeated in battle and takes to the woods as a refugee. Bodice, the more vigorous sister, comes out on top and behaves like her father to maintain the wall. The people eventually revolt against her, and she is executed by a new revolutionary government headed by a peasant woman, Cordelia. This government proceeds to act just as autocratically, again to maintain the wall. Meanwhile, Lear, who has had his eyes put out by an inhuman doctor, wanders off like Oedipus, and then changes into Tolstoy preaching charity. In the last scene, he goes to tear down the wall symbolically with his own hands, and is shot by the guard.

The message is that successive régimes behave mistakenly in similar ways in order to preserve their authority, and that improvement can only come through a change of heart. We have heard this a thousand times in connection with the replacement of dynastic or class autocracies by totalitarian régimes, but the fable is too abstract to have much relevance to our problems in the confused and relatively tolerant world of the Western democracies. We are not bothered much at the moment by Lears, Bodices and Cordelias, at least in internal policies, but rather by the complexities of industrial society. The horror that Mr Bond presents us with—mangling, gouging out of eyes, goring of a ghost by pigs, etc—is not symbolically representative of the evils of our society; it is a projection of individual cruelty, of which Mr Bond is genuinely conscious. Unlike Mme Mnouchkine, who clearly believes that the world consists of a majority of the "good", who have a right to eliminate the large minority of the "bad", Mr Bond has a black vision of a humanity of ferocious beasts, far less redeemable than the characters in Shakespeare's *Lear,* and scarcely leavened at all by the presence of one or two decent people. Both views are extreme, neither offers a hopeful basis for the pursuance of politics and neither, alas, has produced good political theatre.

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young lady called for the occupation of all English theatres. After a heated debate with several French people, I conclude that one can look at *1789* in two ways: it may be a jolly romp, a kind of Guy Fawkes celebration, puerile and harmless; or, if it produces an effect, this can only be insecurely-based, unpredictable emotionalism, such as is engendered by an hysterical pop session or a revivalist meeting. In either case, it is a form of people's theatre that does no honour to the people.

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NOTES & TOPICS

Ireland, Again

LAST JANUARY ENCOUNTER published a piece of mine in which I tried to look at the Irish Question in perspective. Since then the situation has gone from bad to worse. The Provisional IRA has intensified its campaign of destruction and terror in the North. The British Army has seen the role for which it was originally cast—that of shock-absorber between the communities, and protector of the minority—transformed into that of a garrison defending British territory against armed rebellion. This has inevitably given it the appearance of being on the side of the majority. Ulster has become a battlefield, in the literal sense, and political attitudes there have hardened to the point where even would-be moderates have ceased to entertain any rational hope that moderation will prevail.

Are they right to be so down-hearted? Is there no hope of peaceful co-existence, or must the struggle continue until one side or the other wins? Certainly the prospects of an agreed solution to the basic Irish problem are as remote as they have ever been, and become more remote with every shot fired, every bomb planted. Even without the violence anything that could pass for a definitive settlement would take decades, even generations, to come about. For the problem is one of the most intractable that has ever tested the wits of statesmen. Ireland is a very small place, but a God-almighty problem.

The nature of the conflict there is very much less simple than outsiders commonly suppose. The sectarian division between Catholics and Protestants tends to be regarded as the only one, or at any rate the fundamental one, whereas in reality it is only the most conspicuous symptom of a deeper division. Religion, on either side, is often no more than an adjunct to the sense of ethnic identity. The "Irish" Irish—who constitute a three-to-one majority in Ireland as a whole, and a 40 per cent minority in Northern Ireland—have maintained their allegiance to the old faith as a natural reaction to the Protestantism of Great Britain. The million Scotch Irish who live in north-eastern Ireland (incidentally, a well-defined geographical unit) are Protestants because their ancestors were closer, in every sense, to Protestant Scotland than to Catholic Ireland, and because their Protestantism now emphasises the fact that they are Irishmen with a difference.

In other words, it is a profound fallacy to suggest—as commentators repeatedly do—that the Irish conflict is a bizarre survival from the 17th century, without relevance to the modern age. Actually, it is a typical modern conflict, because the underlying forces in it are nationalistic. Nationalism is by far the strongest motive of political action in the 20th century. It may derive sustenance from a traditional religious belief (as in the Arab states) or from a revolutionary quasi-religious faith (as in the Communist states), but throughout the whole world—and nowhere more strikingly than at the *UN*—the nation-state reigns supreme. What distinguishes the Irish struggle from other contemporary conflicts is not that it is uniquely old-fashioned, but rather than it is uniquely complex.

Thus, while it is certainly much truer to describe the struggle as Scotch Irish *versus* "Irish" Irish than as Protestant *versus* Catholic, it is not the whole truth by any means. Another aspect is United Kingdom *versus* United Ireland, and this of course involves a third party, Great Britain. It is a matter of record that the British Isles were for a considerable period of time united in a single polity, whereas Ireland has never, in fact, been united. Fifty years ago what is now the Republic of Ireland seceded from the United Kingdom, which has since been the "United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland". At the time of secession majority opinion in the South was probably neither republican nor separatist. The 1921 Treaty, which retained a form of allegiance to the Crown and allowed Britain the use of the "Treaty ports", was endorsed by the Irish people in a general election. Hard-line republicans, however, with De Valera's encouragement, rejected the Treaty as a betrayal of their cause, and a terrible civil war ensued (in which, incidentally, the republicans were condemned by the Church and the Free State Government interned over 11,000 people without trial). The republicans lost the war, but won the peace; and their mythical version of history has increasingly come to dominate the Irish mind in recent years.

THE MYTH HAS BEEN particularly disastrous in two ways. It has fostered the notion that the IRA defeated the British Army in the so-called war of independence (*i.e.*, the terrorist campaign, 1919-21), and has convinced most Southern Irishmen that the North is a British colony, whose Scotch Irish/Protestant majority would have had no choice but to join a United

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Irish Republic if British armed support had been withdrawn. Both these ideas are utterly false. In 1919-21 the British Army had recently emerged from four years of supremely debilitating warfare, and British public opinion felt a growing disgust at the repression of what appeared to be majority feeling in Ireland as a whole. All the same, the British Army was certainly not beaten, and there was a limit to what British public opinion was prepared to concede for the sake of ending the violence. If the Treaty negotiations had broken down, coercion would have been resumed with strong public backing in Great Britain; and the likelihood is that it would have succeeded, as it had often succeeded before. In his recent history of the IRA Mr Tim Pat Coogan states that before Michael Collins agreed to the Truce, which was the prelude to negotiations, "the guerrillas were in fact almost at the end of their tether." This, no doubt, was why Collins signed the Treaty: he knew, as De Valera could not know, that his men were unequal to a prolonged trial of strength with the British. Lloyd George offered as much as British opinion, or his judgment of British interests, would permit him to offer; and he threatened an immediate renewal of violence if the terms were not accepted. Moreover, it was no bluff: if the Treaty had not been signed the threat would have been made good.

Throughout the negotiations Lloyd George tried to explain to the Irish that the Ulster Unionists, too, were not bluffing. The British wanted a federal solution for Ireland and would gladly have given their support to any agreement arrived at between Sinn Fein and the Ulster Unionists. But no agreement was reached, and the Irish persisted—against all the evidence—in blaming the British. Lloyd George could not make them see that Ulster Unionist sentiment was a formidable, spontaneous thing, and that it would be quite impossible for any British government to expel the Ulstermen from the United Kingdom or to force them into a United Ireland. The triumph of republicanism in the South, and Irish neutrality during World War II, merely confirmed and consolidated the *status quo*.

THESE TWO PERENNIAL Irish myths—about force and about Ulster—have a bearing upon the present situation which needs to be firmly stressed. The Provisional IRA is clearly acting on the assumption that terrorism did the trick before and will do it again, while the Government of the Republic still looks to London rather than to Belfast for a solution of

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the Irish Question. The partition of Ireland is seen, even now, as a manifestation of British imperialism, rather than as a true reflection of Irish realities. So long as the myth about Ulster is believed there will be no hope of a settlement, and so long as the myth about force is believed there will be no hope even of a cease-fire.

DURING THE PAST YEAR there has been a very marked change in British public opinion on Ulster. In 1969 the consensus was distinctly hostile to the majority and favourable to the minority. As a result of the IRA's activities the balance of feeling has been reversed. What began as sympathy for the civil rights movement has turned to sympathy for those who, having met all the original demands, still find themselves denounced as oppressors. Most British people have come to the conclusion that the civil rights movement was used as a battering-ram by republican extremists, and that the latest demands will merely lead to further demands *ad infinitum*. The need for reforms two years ago is fully acknowledged, but the campaign to secure them is now regarded as having been exploited by revolutionaries, and it is no longer felt to be the rights of the minority, but rather those of the majority, that are threatened. In contrast with the 1919-21 experience, the British Army is now operating against an enemy who cannot be said to have democratic right on his side. The troops, moreover, are relatively fresh: they have had no recent Armageddon to exhaust them, and there is no sign of their morale cracking. On the contrary, they seem to prefer dealing with the IRA to having to face gangs of stone-throwing hooligans for hours on end. The public in Britain is right behind them and allegations that they have "roughed up" suspects are treated either with scepticism or with understanding.

There has also been an important change in American opinion. Before the British Empire started to disintegrate, and before the United States took its place as world policeman, Americans felt free to give moral and financial support to any subversive movement within the Empire, and more especially to the Irish national movement with which millions of Irish Americans naturally tended to identify. But nowadays everything is rather different. The United States has become, in effect, an imperial power, with a fairly jaundiced attitude towards subversion. The folk memory of Irish Americans has become more mellow with the passage of time, for there are comparatively few recent immigrants from

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Ireland—Britain, not the United States, being now the main receptacle for Ireland's surplus population. Moreover, the enhanced status of Irish Americans in U.S. society makes them thoroughly allergic to the idea of an Irish workers' republic (*à la* Cuba), which now inspires Sinn Fein, the orthodox IRA, and Miss Bernadette Devlin. (Miss Devlin handed on to the Black Panthers a key of the City of New York presented to her by Mayor Lindsay.) Senator Edward Kennedy's recent attack on Northern Ireland may in some degree have revived ancestral prejudice, but fifty years ago it would have done so far more effectively.

The biggest change, however, has been in Northern Ireland itself. The IRA atrocities have given a strong boost to the "No Surrender" spirit and appear to vindicate those hard-liners who said it was folly to disarm the Royal Ulster Constabulary and to disband the "B" Special Reservists. There is, indeed, substance in the argument that, during the so-called honeymoon period—when it was thought that the Army's main task was to defend Catholics against Protestant mobs—the IRA was able to build up its armouries and its street organisation in readiness for the urban guerrilla who has proved so devastating in 1971. At first the Army was under orders to handle the minority with tender care and to do nothing which might ruffle its susceptibilities. In retrospect, one can see that this was a serious military error, though a less conciliatory policy in the early stages could have been exploited by the trouble-makers in other ways. However that may be, there can be little doubt that Ulster Unionists are now overwhelmingly hard-line in outlook and it is very possible, not to say probable, that in a general election Dr Ian Paisley and his supporters would sweep the poll.

IN IRELAND (and elsewhere, for that matter) extremists sometimes turn into the most effective moderates, and a man who has the prestige of unswerving militancy may become the only man capable of restraining madcap elements on his own side. It is noteworthy that, whereas De Valera and Sean Lemass—both veterans of the Easter Rising—were able, when it suited them, to swoop on the IRA and intern large numbers of men at the Curragh, Mr Jack Lynch—whose prowess has been confined to football and hurling—has still (at the time of writing) been unable to do so. One might argue, therefore, that stabilisation between North and South would not necessarily be prevented, but might actually be promoted, by hard-line leadership on both sides. On that hypothesis it would be wrong

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André Deutsch

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to dismiss Dr Paisley's claim as a potential leader in the North, or Mr Charles Haughey's in the South. Paisley is still regarded as a bogeyman even by many Protestants, but his political qualities, as distinct from his religious crankiness, are coming to the fore. Since he entered Parliament he has said more than once that he would not penalise a man on account of his religion, provided he were loyal to the Constitution. With that approach he might become at least tolerable to law-abiding Catholics.

Meanwhile—but for how long nobody can tell—Mr Brian Faulkner is Prime Minister. When he succeeded Major James Chichester-Clark (now Lord Moyola) a genuine Scotch Irishman succeeded an Anglo-Irish squire. The transition was symbolic. Mr Faulkner is a very able man with a somewhat equivocal record, but in any case he is a true representative of the Scotch Irish community. In the British Press he has been described, over and over again, as "Ulster's last chance", the implication being that if he were overthrown the British Government would have no option but to suspend Stormont and introduce direct rule. The Home Secretary, Mr Maudling, prudently insists that the British Government seeks to judge not personalities, but policies, and that any leader democratically chosen in Northern Ireland would have British support so long as he stood by the agreed programme. Direct rule, according to Mr Maudling, is contemplated only as a last resort. It would be better to state more firmly still that the British Government has no intention of resorting to it, because extremists would undoubtedly welcome it and are encouraged by the thought that the Government will eventually be forced to introduce it.

THE PROVISIONAL IRA is certainly playing for direct rule, because it calculates (wrongly, in my view) that the British Government and people would soon tire of the burden and would then deliver the Six Counties to a United Ireland. No doubt the burden would, indeed, become much heavier if Stormont were removed, because for one thing the British security forces might then have to face a war on two fronts—against extreme Protestants fighting for a separate, independent Northern Ireland, as well as against the IRA. But I do not believe that the British would withdraw, and in any case, if they did withdraw, I share Dr Conor Cruise O'Brien's view as to what would be most likely to happen. Dr O'Brien foresees, in that event, a virtual elimination of the Catholics in Belfast and, if the Irish Army were to intervene and occupy some territory in the southern part of the Province, a possible re-drawing of the Border; but essentially, at the end of the day, an unconquered Protestant redoubt in the north-eastern corner of Ireland. Dr O'Brien is convinced, as I am, that the Protestants in Ulster would resist, and that they have the means to do so. (The restraint which they showed throughout the summer, under supreme provocation, was evidence of remarkably good discipline).

The British Government has an arduous task, but at least it should have no difficulty in perceiving the imperatives of interest and honour, which in this case coincide. Britain cannot abandon Northern Ireland, so long as a majority of its people wish to remain in the United Kingdom. If we upheld the democratic right of the Gibraltarians to remain British, how could we conceivably betray our fellow-citizens in Northern Ireland? Besides, we have a strong strategic interest in the Province, which was vital to us in the last War and is still highly relevant to our security. The Russians are ceaselessly developing their naval power, and their submarine fleet is a most formidable threat to Britain. If the whole of Ireland were neutral, or perhaps even hostile, in a future war, Britain could hardly avoid being starved into submission.[1]

Mr Heath, in spite of his preoccupation with British entry into Europe, has certainly not been neglecting the Irish problem. Towards the end of September he invited Mr Faulkner and Mr Lynch to Chequers, for the first meeting of Premiers of the British archipelago since MacDonald, Craig and Cosgrave met—also at Chequers—in May 1924. To all appearances the talks were entirely fruitless, but it was no bad thing that they could be held at all, and certainly reassuring that they were held without weakening or calling in question the constitutional status of Northern Ireland. It is also very fortunate that, at the time of writing, Ireland is still not fundamentally an issue between the major parties in Britain. No doubt this is one reason why Mr Heath has been so reluctant to apply economic or other sanctions to the Republic of Ireland. Another is that

[1] The Soviet Union is clearly interested in the Ulster situation. A number of leading Russian and other Warsaw Pact representatives descended upon Belfast in mid-October for the second congress of the Communist party of Ireland. At the same time a plane-load of Russian and Czech arms, en route for Northern Ireland, was seized at Amsterdam; and shortly afterwards Mr Kosygin, speaking in Ottawa, had the nerve to compare the treatment of Roman Catholics in Ulster most unfavourably with the treatment of Jews in the Soviet Union.

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Irish labour is valuable to us, and yet another that urban guerrilla tactics might spread to British cities if Britain decided to get tough with the Republic. The large Irish population here is a Trojan horse which no British politician can ignore.

Above all, however, Mr Heath would not wish to create a siege mentality in the Republic, or to violate what is, in fact, a natural relationship between Great Britain and Ireland. Yet he is well known as a man who dislikes being pushed around, and the Republic would be unwise to assume that the unique privileges which Britain extends to it could in no circumstances be revoked.

John Grigg

Letter from Paris

The Idiot, or Sartre's Flaubert

JEAN-PAUL SARTRE has at last finished the first two thousand pages of the book on Gustave Flaubert which he began more than fifteen years ago, and they have recently been published by Gallimard in two volumes under the provocative title *L'Idiot de la Famille*.[1] He completed them with a combination of guilt and relief. This emerged in a conversation with the two authors of his monumental biography which appeared last year;[2] the length of the conversation was almost proportionate to the length of the work, for it filled more than two full pages in *Le Monde*.

Why had he resumed work on his Flaubert, which he had dropped in 1955 after writing the first 1,000 pages? Because, he said, he had wanted at last really to finish something. The *Ethics* he had announced in his *L'Etre et le Néant* had never been written; his novel cycle had been shelved; there would be no sequel to the first volume of his *Critique of Dialectical Reason;* and his work on Tintoretto would remain a fragment. But *Flaubert* was the one thing he was going to complete. He expected to publish two further volumes, on one of which he had made excellent progress; it would even include a history of the development of the arts round about 1850. The last and most important volume, a structural analysis of *Madame Bovary*, was still at the project stage. He thought he would need "another three years" to finish with Flaubert's neurosis, and "two more" for *Madame Bovary*. True, the study of *Madame Bovary* could be deduced from the analyses in the first two volumes, but the interest of this novel lay in the factors that could not be so deduced. Thus at the age of sixty-six Sartre was expecting to spend five years on completing this enormous (or, as Flaubert used to say, *hénaurme*) book. Other projects, such as a play or the "political testament" he has announced, may intervene. So we cannot exclude the possibility that this work that he is really determined to complete (though not beyond *Madame Bovary*, for he is no longer interested in the later Flaubert) will remain a torso, though one larger than any usual biography or analysis of a writer's work—larger even than Sartre's over-dimensional work on Jean Genet, which began as a short introduction but grew and grew. . . . His pleasure that the first two volumes have been published—because of their weight and his reputation their publication was the great literary event of the spring—was expressed in this marathon interview in the sentence: "I am now faced with an agreeable obligation: that of finishing my Flaubert." The title refers to the fact that Gustave has learned to read and write rather late. Although an admirable letter written at the age of nine is known, Sartre regards this lateness as a most important symptom to be linked at once to a frustrated childhood and to Flaubert's future relation to words.

In an interview in September 1970 with the ultra-Left *Idiot Internationale*, the masthead of which states that its editorial committee consists of "all the political prisoners of this régime", Sartre spoke of his Flaubert in different, almost apologetic terms. He tried to explain the extent to which the events of May 1968 had changed him, made him a "different man," caused him to break with the "classical intellectual" he had hitherto been.

> My problem [Sartre said] is that of a 65-year-old intellectual who for twenty-five or twenty-seven years has had in mind writing a book about Flaubert, *i.e.*, using familiar scientific

[1] Gallimard, 2 vols., 110 fr. There is something striking about the usage of "Idiot." One of Sartre's favourite left-wing papers is called *L'idiot Internationale*. For Sartre, who once considered writing about Dostoevsky, there might also be an association of thoughts with the famous Russian novel. For the journalists, there could be a provocative contradiction to the French self-estimation of being so very intelligent. *"L'idiot"* might also be compared to Voltaire's *"huron"*, the man who does not play the game of being clever and by his "simplicity" sees through all the conventions and tacit conspiracies which the "intelligent ones" take for granted. These are quick associations. In any case, it would appear to be the case that the French *Zeitgeist* has got itself fixed on a new word.

[2] Michel Contat and Michel Rybalka, *Les écrits de Sartre* (1970).

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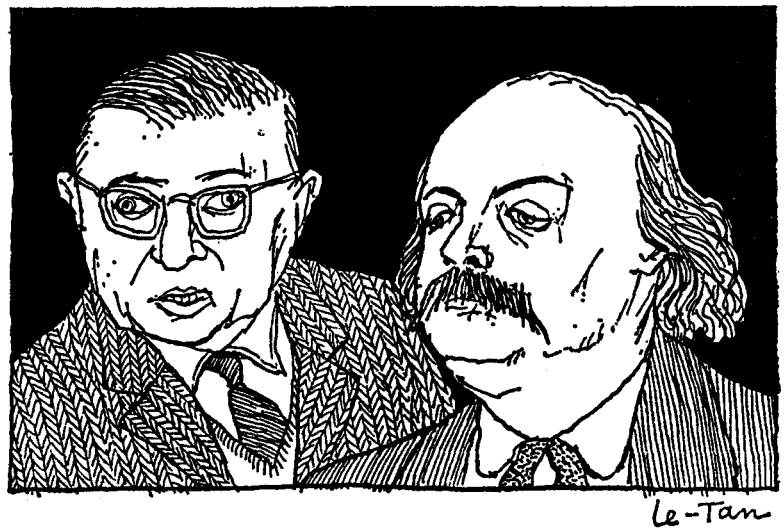
> methods to analyse a human being. Then came May 1968. I had been working on the book for fifteen years, and I am deeply involved in it. What am I to do? Give it up? There would be no sense in that, and yet someone has said that the forty volumes of Lenin's works constitute an oppression of the masses. What am I to do? I have decided to finish the book, but that leaves me at the level of the traditional intellectual. . . . . I do not see a way out of the dilemma. Is there an intellectual method that is not directly accessible to the masses that can yet find intermediaries through whom it may reach them? Is my Flaubert a work that will necessarily fade and vanish, or one that may be useful in the long term? It is impossible to tell. I dislike, for instance, what some authors write, but I cannot maintain that their writings may not at some time or other be accepted by the masses, and for reasons it is impossible to foresee today. . . .

Thus Sartre is still the Sartre who in *Words*, the memoir of his childhood, mocked at and rejected his literary bent, but made a book (*i.e.*, literature again) out of that mockery and rejection; the Sartre who repudiates but nevertheless embodies the "intellectual type". He came to grips vigorously with the little *Poulou* that he once was and used him to illustrate his theme. In connection with his *Flaubert* he says that the life of another person can be completely understood—he calls it "*totalisé*"—only when it has been completed; an interesting view, as his object is to understand, not just externally but from within, in all its intimacy, a life that (in his opinion) can be made communicable and transparent to the last degree. On this complex question he has apparently no doubts; after years of familiarity with all the aspects of Flaubert's life he "knows in advance" what Flaubert will do and, as there were no psycho-analysts in Flaubert's lifetime, he claims to know him better than Flaubert could know himself. Sartre believes the method he developed or hammered out in the course of this work to be a way, not just to assumptions about or a closer approach to a man and a writer, but to a form of total understanding. ("*Nous essaierons d'effectuer la restitution compréhensive de cette existence considéree comme totalisation en cours.*")

AT THE SAME TIME Sartre does not deny that he has written a *fable* about Flaubert, a non-fiction novel describing the formation and development of an individual belonging to a definite period, bearing its imprint and that of his family history. The first part deals with Flaubert as a product of that family at that particular time, *i.e.*, as the second son (if the children who died young are not counted) of a respected Rouen surgeon who felt him to be superfluous (as the eldest son was to succeed him professionally). Also, his mother wanted a girl, who indeed arrived after Gustave and is said to have monopolised her mother's tenderness. Maurice Nadeau comments:

> It would be a senseless quarrel to ask the author how he got to know in which way Gustave's mother did her breast-feeding. He readily admits that he does not know, that nothing proves that it was really that way, that he invented a "fable." But even if I am proved wrong, he says in essence, I am nevertheless right. Supposing that things happened differently, my approach (*démarche*) is the only one that is appropriate. O method, how powerful thou art! (*La Quinzaine Littéraire*, June 1971).

The unhappy influence on Gustave Flaubert of his relationship with his parents and siblings recalls Sartre's Jean Genet, known as "the bastard" because of his illegitimate birth and therefore similarly rejected as socially superfluous. In the second part Sartre sets



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out to show what a man makes of what the circumstances have made of him. It must, of course, be borne in mind that we have here only the first 2,100 pages (about a million words); but so far the emphasis is on Flaubert's compulsions and complexes, including his neurosis (and in this connection Sartre insists that Flaubert was not an epileptic, as many previous biographers have maintained, but—an hysteric).

This book, in which many chapters and above all digressions (on Hamlet, actors, laughter, which is oddly considered as conservative and even reactionary behaviour! . . . etc.) are fascinating, contains a remarkable contradiction. Sartre, as he tells us in *Words*, has been preoccupied with Flaubert since his adolescence. He wanted to read *Madame Bovary* when he was twelve. "Darling", his mother said to him, "if you read such books now, what will be left for you later?" To which Poulou replied proudly: "I shall live them." Sartre has written extensively about Flaubert in *Being and Nothingness* and in the *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, as well as in *What is Literature*? He disliked Flaubert as a bourgeois writer, as a believer in art for art's sake. This antipathy never excluded admiration of the novelist's greatness, but only in this work did he overcome it and replace it by "empathy." (Flaubert may have said, "*Madame Bovary, c'est moi!*", but Sartre expresses a profound disgust with poor Emma whom he considers irredeemably stupid and base—no "empathy" with her!)

In Sartre's view Flaubert has been conditioned by his childhood to pessimism and to passivity, to the desire to be a woman, to be old. Sartre dwells at great length on Flaubert's erotic life—and promises to write at even greater length about it in the following volumes. He finds him conditioned entirely by femininity, as if Flaubert had really been—to quote Jean-François Revel's review—"*une lesbienne*". But what of the untiring literary work of this "passive" person? Literature—says Sartre with contempt—is "*une mini-praxis*", a bare minimum of activity, a flight from true deeds in the real world. So a contemporary whose major activity has been writing books and who has been fascinated during the greatest part of his life by the writer Flaubert to whom nothing other than literature has ever been real, wants us to believe that to him Flaubert is just an interesting case study, and not relevant to himself. Sartre dares not say: "*Flaubert, c'est moi*"; he stops short of analysing a fascination which has almost turned into an obsession.

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THERE IS VERY LITTLE, at any rate in the first two volumes, about Flaubert's most important works; we are shown Flaubert, not as a writer, but as the second son of a French doctor in the last years of the reign of the Bourgeois King, a well-documented case both for Marxian social analysis and Freudian psycho-analysis, which here flow together into a single stream. Also Flaubert is a writer who based his work on *le Néant* and was therefore bound to fascinate the philosopher of *L'Etre et le Néant.* Flaubert wanted to start out from nothingness and to reach the whole, and even proposed to write "a book without a subject".

Those who have not sufficient love and admiration for Flaubert to want to read every line that is written about him will find here no real explanation why such a monumental work is so full of the most minute and sometimes tiresomely repetitive analyses, reflections, and asides. For, though anyone interested in Flaubert will learn many new things, including material from previously unknown sources, it is surely legitimate to suggest that it is interest in Jean-Paul Sartre rather than in Gustave Flaubert that will cause many to buy the book and some to read it patiently.

For *The Idiot of the Family* is in all respects authentic Sartre, actually a *summa* of his philosophy, though so far it presents us with only a portion of Flaubert's life. The great exception is the chapter on the adulterous couple's celebrated cab-drive that involved Flaubert in a charge of pornography, though he did not devote a single word to what took place in the cab, but merely described its route. Sartre does not examine the literary significance of this famous passage, but triumphantly connects it with a story told by the Goncourt brothers of how Flaubert crudely described to them how he first had relations with his mistress Louise Colet in a moving cab and from time to time put his head out of the window in order to laugh. So the little that is here incidentally mentioned about Flaubert's masterpiece serves only to illustrate his life, even though observations about "the imagination" and about "a life whose failure led to a triumph" can conceivably lead us in the direction of literature.

I HAVE ALREADY REFERRED to the curious title, *The Idiot of the Family*. According to his niece, Flaubert learned to read later than other children. Sartre regards this as a determining factor in Flaubert's development, and in turn the result of the severity of his mother, who never hugged and caressed him but brought him up on strict disciplinary lines. Sartre's hypothetical conjectures about Flaubert's early upbringing are later presented as established fact, from which many other things are then in turn deduced as established fact. In Sartre's eyes we know nothing about a man or a writer if we do not know about his infancy. So he just *has* to be certain about child Gustave. . . .

THE BOOK MOVES constantly between what its author calls prospective and regressive analysis. It is therefore surprising that Sartre has so far not "prospectively" reflected on Flaubert's literary posterity, which was so much larger than that of Balzac or Stendhal. From Henry James and Turgenev, to Proust, Pound, and Eliot, there is a constant meditation of great writers on Flaubert, a Flaubertian school—as indicated for instance in Roger Shattuck's book *The Stoic Comedians: Flaubert, Joyce, Beckett* or in Nathalie Sarraute's essay on "*Flaubert, le précurseur*". Seen in the light of his influence, Flaubert must indeed appear as "our contemporary" while Sartre so far confines him rather strictly to his epoch and its limitations. Why, then, have Henry James, Marcel Proust, and now Jean-Paul Sartre himself been so fascinated by this writer, and given his work and his attitude to literature so much thought?

Sartre gives at different times different answers. For instance he claims that we can only know a writer if we have much material on his family and childhood and that Flaubert through his own correspondence and other testimonials is a unique case of a richly documented writer's life:

> And of all we know among those long since dead there is no one whom we like. . . . Nursing, the digestive system and excretion, the first cares about cleanliness, the mother relationship: of all these fundamental things, nothing. . . . Without the earliest childhood, it suffices to say that a biography is only building on sand. . . .

IT IS SURPRISING THAT Sartre should have erected such a huge edifice on such slender foundations, for he says depreciatingly of interpretations by others that they are like "cloud castles built on thick mist." The reader is hurtled from one period of Flaubert's life to another, and references to innumerable personal circumstances of which Sartre takes knowledge for granted. (For a chronological life of Flaubert the reader will do better to rely on Enid Starkie's biography, and for an introduction to his work on Maurice Nadeau's study of *Flaubert's Greatness.*)

One of the most successful chapters is devoted to Flaubert's fascination with "stupidity",

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his pin-pointing of turns of phrase, which later assumes encyclopaedic proportions. Sartre shows that the stupid bourgeois commonplaces that Flaubert ridiculed were reflected in his own way of thinking, particularly in his letters, and that his attitude to bourgeois stupidity, as to the bourgeois world in general was ambivalent. In examining Flaubert's lifelong fascination with stupidity, Sartre notes that there were really two kinds:

> Flaubert unites under the same name two contradictory absurdities, of which one is the essential quality and the other the acid which corrodes it.

Many of the "*clichés*" which Flaubert jotted down for his *Dictionnaire des idées reçues* can be found in his own letters as sincerely held opinions, or as turns of phrases used without irony. Flaubert, who thought that in novel writing there was room for scientific progress and who at the same time ridiculed every belief in progress, did not escape an ambivalence which Sartre elucidates.

IT IS REMARKABLE that among the factors that led to his becoming a Flaubertologist so unique in every respect there is one that Sartre does not mention. Flaubert hated the bourgeois class without ever being able to escape from it, and Sartre has often represented himself as a bourgeois intellectual who "will hate the bourgeoisie to his dying day" but is unable to escape from the bourgeois world; and his denunciation of literature has actually become the very quintessence of the literary. He claims there is no connection between the paradox of Flaubert and his own, that he chose Flaubert precisely because he was a complete stranger to him. This claim might be worth subjecting to the same kind of psychoanalysis as Sartre devotes to Flaubert (or, rather, subjects him to).

But these are hasty responses to a book on which an important philosopher and writer has worked for many years scrapping many earlier versions. In these remarks I haven't attempted to offer more than a first impression of such a massive work. For the time being a "fragment" of these huge dimensions defies assessment; it confronts us almost like some natural phenomenon. Jean-Paul Sartre's *Flaubert* will remain an important work even though, as is inevitable, the critics question a great deal of what the author puts forward as absolute certainty. Sartre says himself that he "no longer has any views about this book." Consequently, the views of others will surely affect him little.

François Bondy

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Literature & Criticism

Sailing to Byzantium

By Roy Fuller

"OBSERVATIONS on poetry and its enemies" is the descriptive sub-title on the jacket of John Press' book.[1] The idea that poetry *has* enemies is not one that springs readily to mind: rather, one's always been conscious of a somewhat excessive prestige attaching to the practice—quite aside from the sense of guilt that one's own contributions have *ipso facto* acquired the honoured title. Hurray for the enemies, indeed, one might even say, thinking in jaundiced moments of the enormous amount of the stuff produced and the wilder claims made for its effect by more romantic practitioners.

The paranoia of the jacket is not borne out by the contents of the book. As we know from *The Fire and the Fountain* and *The Chequer'd Shade* (in conjunction with which the author wishes the present book to be judged), Press is well aware of what's going on but has a comfortingly balanced manner, plus a gift for illuminating quotation. His "enemies" are the expected bands of moralists and scientists, ultilitarians and totalitarians. In a sense we can't dissent from most of what he has to say and he points out some fresh features in familiar walks, but we miss a hurting crunch in the discussion. Which, for instance, is poetry's greater enemy—society's lip-service and neglect or authority's attention through persecution?

Poetry's real enemies, we can't help thinking, are the poet himself and the literary critic —the former in his off-putting bardic and esoteric robes, the latter through the interposition of his systems between poem and reader. In Auden's commonplace-book, *A Certain World*, there was a quotation from P. B. Medawar about the brilliant English graduates produced by Oxbridge in the 1950s—right up, he says, in the class of James D. Watson of DNA fame. "But", Sir Peter adds,

> Watson had one towering advantage over all of them: in addition to being extremely clever he had something important to be clever *about*. This is an advantage which scientists enjoy over most people engaged in intellectual pursuits.

In one of Renford Bambrough's recent programmes on the wireless he tackled Sir Peter about this remark: wasn't the implication that there isn't anything for the brilliant English graduate to do except to be clever in the abstract—that being clever about *Hamlet* or *Lear* or Plato isn't being clever about something? Sir Peter tactfully qualified this extreme, but we feel, I think, that the really brilliant mind that confines itself strictly to literary criticism is likely to produce a good deal of brilliant bull. Better that a literary critic should be clever than a dunce, no doubt, yet a sense of waste and even irrelevance often assails us as we read a critic like Frank Kermode. His influence and authority run through several of the books under review; his pronouncements have become one of the touchstones for current critics, as those of Eliot and Richards were for a previous generation, and the publication of a selection of his essays

[1] *The Lengthening Shadows*. By JOHN PRESS. Oxford University Press, £3.25.

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in paperback[2] may be expected to extend the process. One must admire Professor Kermode's learning and brain-power, and in their place (as in his pages, first published in ENCOUNTER, on Cyril Connolly's "100 Key Books,") they are quite devastatingly magisterial. But far too often the cleverness balloons up into mere fancy and his specific judgments, especially in the field of the recent, are likely to be unreliable. Every critic sometimes says silly things and perhaps Kermode's lapses seem all the sillier against the general masterful knowingness. *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* "should ideally be read aloud by a lady who has preserved the Edinburgh accent in all its soft severity." Och awa', mon!

Critics like Arnold and Eliot had an outlet for fancy in their other literary activities. The critic who is merely a critic is no new phenomenon but one has the notion that in olden days his accent would be on scholarship and, of course, his influence would be on a much smaller academic population. The trend-finding and pattern-drawing in modern literature which Kermode on the whole keeps within sensible bounds can be taken to grotesque lengths by lesser men, the bulk of whom, one is bound to say, are American dons. Indeed, the sub-title of Professor Hassan's book[3] is "Towards a Postmodern Literature": stealing a march can perhaps go no farther. "What model of modernism can best serve the avant-garde of the future?" he asks. "Let us entertain some paradigms of innovation. . . ." We are then taken through (in the present tense, as though the author felt this aptest for "modernism") the lives and work of Sade, Hemingway, Kafka, Genet, Beckett. In a final chapter other ill-assorted but fashionable names are brought together. The tradition adumbrated is that of vanishing forms and silence. "Silence, as concept or metaphor, fills our place. The resistance that some academics still offer to it cannot endure." (Is the maquis, weak enough in all conscience, to be bumped off?) It must be admitted that there is a grisly fascination in Hassan's portentous style (hovering always on unintelligibility) and selectivity: it tempts one to re-embrace the apocalyptic notion of Marxist critics of the 1930s, like Christopher Caudwell, that movements like Dada really did mark the fizzling out of bourgeois literature.

Nevertheless, Hassan seems comparatively harmless beside another exponent of modernism, Richard Poirier, also an American university professor. In a way, Poirier's desire to reclaim literature from its status in some quarters as a set of dead texts merits praise, but many parts of his book[4] are self-destructively crude and naive. How inappropriate or premature to read here a solemn discussion of authors like Barth and Pynchon! "In illustrating what I mean by 'the performing self' I'll be concerned mostly with Robert Frost, Norman Mailer, and Henry James," Poirier says, without betraying any sense of incongruity. Indeed, one speculates as to what attracted him to teach literature at all.

> Since the exalted arts . . . have all but surrendered the provision of fun and entertainment to the popular arts, criticism must turn to film and song if it is to remind itself that the arts really do not need to be boring.

One could sympathise with a critic who anatomised the boring in art (not at all a straightforward subject, for the boring can be both avoidable and unavoidable), but one's sense is that Poirier doesn't care for "exalted" art at all, since his idea of "a work of great power and historical grasp" is "A Day in the Life" from the Beatles' *Sgt. Pepper* album. By the side of Poirier the apotheosis of popular art by certain English critics seems pusillanimous.

NO DOUBT THIS SORT OF ROT starts with the abdication of the critic from the act of evaluation. As I write the present notice I see in *The New York Review of Books* a letter from Morse Peckham of the University of South Carolina, a riposte to a review of his works, saying that he believes it to be an error that a theory of art is "rightly and inevitably evaluative", as his reviewer maintained. Such an extreme position wouldn't, I suppose, be defended by Hassan or even Poirier, but surely behind both critics, and others of similar kidney, is a recklessness of judgment that stems from too great an interest in connections and intentions, and too indulgent a treatment of what is actually on the page or score or canvas. Yet another book on modernism (in 20th-century poetry), Professor Spears' *Dionysus and the City*,[5] engages this very question. Kermode and Northrop Frye "are the two most considerable critics to emerge since World War II," says Spears, but goes on to boggle at Frye's "postulate that the critic should have nothing to do with evaluation." As we know from his book on Auden, Spears

[2] *Modern Essays*. By FRANK KERMODE. Fontana, 75p.
[3] *The Dismemberment of Orpheus*. By IHAB HASSAN. Oxford University Press, £3.90.
[4] *The Performing Self*. By RICHARD POIRIER. Chatto & Windus, £1.75.
[5] *Dionysus and the City*. By MONROE K. SPEARS. Oxford University Press, £3.45, paper 90p.

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is a clear and sensible critic, and many elucidatory passages of the present work will be extremely useful to the undergraduate and the general reader. It's a pity he's been enticed into such Byzantine activities as dating the start of "modernism" and quoting critics on critics—and also, really, that his book looks at its subject in the symbolic terms of its title. Inevitably the sacred texts are shuffled through, and after Ginsberg and Lowell and Plath have been cited the Dionysian principle is discovered in—naturally—the pop music of our day. But Spears keeps one foot on the ground at least, and it is a further regret that when he produces poets for attention outside the fashionable canon we can't muster great confidence in his taste.

Part of the interest and novelty of Jonathan Raban's book[6] is precisely his refusal to stick to the threadbare names and themes, though a certain parochialness results and some of his praise for newer poets is rather desperate. Raban is a young English critic, very bright if somewhat of a gas-bag. The symbolism of his title and the general strategy of his book are less important than his individual judgments and summaries—though the symbol does enable him to write an effective final sentence: "The society of the poem is already showing signs of being a Mad Hatter's tea-party of nutty inventors." No Peckhamite or Fryeian he:

> What we need now, much more than the most daring experiment in anti-language and post-poetry, is a vocabulary for discriminating seriously between some poems and others; a language of preference and value.

I believe Raban's attitude to be held by more young writers than may be generally thought, but that doesn't detract from the energy and enterprise he has shown in bringing out this book, and the paperback edition provides the means for the wide circulation one would earnestly wish for it.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox not Dionysus is the name that occurs to him when considering pop music. On the Black Mountaineers:

> Projective Verse . . . is most successful as a formula when it is used to dramatise the consciousness of a half-wit whose mind is only capable of moving in a slow grammatical progression from one large, dumb object to another.

There are more complex but equally sharp anatomies of the Liverpool and Protest poets, and of concrete poetry. The difference

[6] *The Society of the Poem.* By JONATHAN RABAN. Harrap, £2.50, paper £1.

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between Raban and the American academics already mentioned indicates that, as in the days of Mr Attlee and Mr Macmillan, this second-rate power should have no qualms about trying to restrain the excesses going on across the Atlantic.

Raban displays a laudable willingness to deal with actual texts, and usually has something intelligent to say about them, but he seems weak on prosody. In analysing Larkin's "Mr Bleaney" he refers curiously to "the jarring reversed foot" in the line "*Fall to within five inches of the sill*", as though the reversed foot at the start of the line were not a common characteristic of iambic pentameter. And might one suggest to him that the preceding line but one ("*The whole time he was at the Bodies, till*") may not really be "a flurry of unaccented syllables"? The speaker of the poem, who is taking over Mr Bleaney's digs, is possibly also a new employee of "the Bodies" (a car-body manufacturing company), and if so the line is intended to be read "The whole time *he* was at the Bodies"—perfectly regular.

The mysteries of prosody fall to be dealt with by Robin Skelton (an academic at a Canadian university) in *The Practice of Poetry*,[7] though he concerns himself more with the frame of mind and the strategies he considers necessary for composing poetry regularly throughout life. Almost inevitably such a book shares the farce and misinformation attendant on a manual of sexual instruction, though in both *genres* a few useful hints can scarcely fail to be imparted. "This should be done every night for a minimum of ten and a maximum of fourteen nights," says Professor Skelton, but he is only advising the budding poet "to set down, on loose sheets of paper . . . every word that comes into one's head over a period of around twenty minutes." Not only budding poets may benefit from Skelton's regimen:

> There is a case of one student I knew who was writing pseudo-Wordsworthian poems, and who had a speech impediment. He undertook to write the nightly exercise for me. At the end of ten days he produced something closely resembling a real poem, written in ordinary day-to-day speech. So far as I know he never wrote another poem, but shortly afterwards, his speech impediment cleared up and he got married.

Like the sexual manualist, Skelton conveys some warnings ("Over-indulgence in verse technique may be dangerous to your health,"

[7] *The Practice of Poetry*. By ROBIN SKELTON. Heinemann Educational Books, £2.25, paper £1.

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he says, parodying the cigarette-packet) but is optimistic on the whole:

> There is, finally, no route to poetry save through deliberate practice of the craft, and while such practice may prove tedious and laborious, it leads at last to an easy control of language and form which gives one the freedom to follow the compulsion of one's imagination without being hindered and obstructed by technical clumsiness.

It's strange that a practitioner should speak thus, as though the exercise of his craft were for the poet not the most pleasurable and purposive part of the business—and as though the struggle with the material ever ended. The parallel with those critics discussed who view literature in terms of trends and prognostications rather than of texts is striking. On the American side of the Atlantic what a dismal course the *littérateur* has to pursue, from Professor Skelton's nightly press-ups to launching himself towards the silent future conceived by Professor Hassan! No wonder that, like Professor Poirier, he will be tempted to close his Pope or Allen Tate and spin a disc of the Rolling Stones. Hardly matter for mirth, however. As Dr Steiner says, "America is the representative and premonitory example. Nowhere has the debilitation of genuine literacy gone further." But it could happen here, despite such as the cheering Raban.

GEORGE STEINER'S *In Bluebeard's Castle*,[8] the T. S. Eliot memorial lectures for 1971, is the most notable of these new books. One is well aware that his "pronouncements" are, in the nice word of Poirier, "operatic." Even his marginal optimism about the endurance of culture is conceived in pessimistic terms. But despite the barnstorming style ("the past drove rats' teeth into the grey pulp of the present") and one's occasional conviction that his theses may be cock (certainly too little related to man's economic organisation), his urgency, seriousness, wide-ranging and clinching references and reminders are of high value.

"We are now in a *post-culture*", is his diagnosis, and he has no difficulty in adducing an appalling list of symptoms (though one would like to see him try to account more fully, in his terms, for the deterioration of 1933 compared with 1914: one doesn't perceive in the outbreak of the First War any elements of revenge for the killing of God or reaction against Messianic socialism, causations which play a large part in his arguments). So far as English poetry is concerned, he conceives the bulk of that to be "now modulating from active presence into the inertness of scholarly conservation . . . fading rapidly from the reach of natural reading." Yes, and we may judge that a number of the books reviewed here fail even in the task of "scholarly conservation", while removing still farther the possibility of "natural reading." Steiner's vision of the alternative for the "classical" poem is either a thin river of text between high banks of footnotes, or a version in pop form, such as the strip-cartoon. The origin of this book in lecture form is part of the reason, I'm sure, for its melodrama and rapid cultural scene-shifting. But the lecturer's natural wish to keep his audience on the edge of their seats by no means implies that his urgent tone and dire warnings are at all misplaced.

Poetic Closure: the title of Mrs Smith's book[9] doesn't indicate that she is out-steinering Steiner. What she has done is to analyse how individual poems end. It may be guessed that this involves a good deal of wordiness, and categories and sub-categories, that smack of mere academic careerism, but Mrs Smith is modest and clear-headed, and somewhat of a relief after reading her other American colleagues. I was rather disappointed that she never arrived at what I would imagine (without any research at all) to be a not uncommon mark of a poem's preparing to end—a sort of special rhetoric or vocabulary, a renewal of impulse, the very reverse of what might be thought to be the appropriate flaps-down procedure. However, possibly this merely indicates the unconfidence of the minor poet who fears landing and has thoughts of making another circuit. Mrs Smith says that her only rival in her ingeniously chosen field is I. A. Richards, with an essay called "How Does a Poem Know When It Is Finished?" By an agreeable coincidence this piece is reprinted in *Poetries and Sciences*,[10] the greater part of which is devoted to a re-edited version of *Science and Poetry*, with a new commentary by the author on that seminal work. Poetry "is capable of saving us." Perhaps those words in its final paragraph didn't seem excessive on their first publication in 1926, though rather dubious on the book's reissue in 1935. But before they are reached there is, of course, still much that's alive and kicking and that merits re-pondering.

[8] *In Bluebeard's Castle*. By GEORGE STEINER. Faber & Faber, £1.75.

[9] *Poetic Closure*. By BARBARA HERRNSTEIN SMITH. University of Chicago Press, $9.75, paper $3.45, £4.40, paper £1.60.

[10] *Poetries and Sciences*. By I. A. RICHARDS. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £1.40.

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Judging & Showing

Novels and their Critics—By BARBARA HARDY

THERE ARE TIMES when the most gloomy critic of academic scholarship is brought violently up against new versions of old criticism which make him turn back gratefully to academic structures he had doubted. Happily there are also times when academic criticism renews its strengths of subtle scrutiny. Some of the best recent books on the novel not only restore tottering faiths in formal criticism, but show up the limitations and complacencies of judgment which turns its back on close analysis without having much to put in its place. Without the proofs and solidities of practical criticism, critics can perform miracles of judgment and comparison. Wells' "The Purple Pireus" can be called Laingian, Mr Polly can be said to take a Kierkegaardian leap, Trollope can be compared favourably to Balzac and Tolstoy. Practical criticism of the novel still emerges as an essential method and medium for judgment, individual definition, and a profound engagement with life inside and outside fiction.

Three books which stand out as substantially and scrupulously engaged with language, form, passion, and intelligence are Alexander Welsh's *The City of Dickens*,[1] A. H. Cash and John M. Stedmond's Sterne collection, *The Winged Skull*,[2] and Gillian Beer's *Meredith: A Change of Masks*,[3] all in their different ways concerned to judge and to show. Not everyone will accept their judgments; Alexander Welsh is on firm ground, revealing new reasons for admiring and for deploring Dickens, but Sterne and Meredith are erratic and idiosyncratic novelists, sentimental, exotic and self-indulgent, and their critics are unlikely to persuade everyone through love and enthusiasm. What they will do, however, is to show fully and concretely the materials they are discussing: whether we like their conclusions or not, we can see exactly what they are, where they come from, and how they arise. This is to praise them very coolly, and for elementary intellectual virtues. More important is their joining of two essential qualities of fine criticism, the revelation of truths about art with the revelation of truths about the experiential world that includes and is larger than art.

SUCH CONJUNCTION does not mark any of the three worthy but never urgent or creative books on Hardy: F. R. Southerington's *Hardy's Vision of Man*,[4] Michael Millgate's *Thomas Hardy: His Career as a Novelist*,[5] and J. I. M. Stewart's *Thomas Hardy*.[6] Alexander Welsh is the author of a good book on Scott, *The Hero of the Waverley Novels*, and he now writes an equally good book on Dickens. It gets close to the text and grapples with it, though its chief insights are historical, cultural and mythical, analysing the nature and significance of marriage, death, and religion in the novels of Dickens. Welsh discusses one subject which is very old hat in Dickens criticism, the guilt-feelings of some of the heroes, but what makes the analysis genuinely renew an old concern, in ways that are self-evidently central to Dickens, is his revelation through the text. There before us on the page is the critic's empirical experience, visible, transparent. When Welsh tells us that David Copperfield, spectator of so much distress, betrays an excessive sense of being wronged, as in the strong responses to the fall of Little Em'ly, when he discusses the collocation of death with Christmas, or when he shows how the Dickensian City represents a killing and profit-making clock-time, he is doing the rudimentary work of showing and not just telling, which we require of critics as well as novelists.

He engages with the personality of the novels with force and wit, and his book is both learned and frequently funny. But what ultimately testifies to his sense and appreciation of Dickens is his sense and appreciation of facts of human experience. Our eyes are opened to a personal encounter in which the critic is subdued and subordinated, properly, to the artist, but still very much alive. Among his valuable renewals of the commonplace

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[1] *The City of Dickens*. By ALEXANDER WELSH. Oxford University Press, £2.40.

[2] *The Winged Skull; Essays on Laurence Sterne*. Ed. A. H. CASH and JOHN M. STEDMOND. Methuen, £4.

[3] *Meredith: A Change of Masks*. By GILLIAN BEER. Athlone Press, £2.50.

[4] *Hardy's Vision of Man*. By F. R. SOUTHERINGTON. Chatto & Windus, £3.15.

[5] *Thomas Hardy: His Career as a Novelist*. By MICHAEL MILLGATE. Bodley Head, £4.20.

[6] *Thomas Hardy*. By J. I. M. STEWART. Longman, £2.50.

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is a discussion of marriage as ending in Victorian fiction. He argues that marriage is not just another instance of the artist's need to conclude somewhere, to draw, in the words of Henry James, "by a geometry of his own" a circle within which relationships shall appear to conclude, but that it also expresses a culturally significant interchange of concepts of death and marriage. We may tend rather slap-happily to see behind these Victorian conclusions a simple excess of security or of insecurity in the institution of marriage. So it is fresh and surprising to find the critic drily discussing the conversion of "sexual revelation that implies death" into a relation that "saves from death." He knows that the rituals of life are as fictitious as novels, and what he says applies to marriage as a convention and a specious ending outside novels: "By marriage he moves from the present generation to the past: if he is willing to take this step, he implicitly concedes his eventual death. The marriage ceremony acknowledges as much in the exchange of vows to be true until death." Perhaps this is providing Women's Lib and Men's Lib with a fresh argument—and it is a valuable political insight—but it is also making cultural history and psychological insight substantial and lively by placing the structures and images of literature in the larger context of social and psychic fact. The book combines a sense of myth, culture, and economics with the necessary sense of Dickensian singularity, and the analysis is never reductive, but dynamic, moving with the work of art.

GILLIAN BEER'S BOOK has a much more limited range and avoids social and cultural analysis, except by implication. It is also a more self-effacing and impersonal-seeming book. Once again the analysis is a practical criticism, shows the critic in the act of reading the novels, and interests us in Meredith because it interests us in life. She analyses Meredith's presentation of Willoughby Patterne's egoism as it shows itself in a strong and immature habit of self-love; and the analysis is done through the old New Critical interpretation of image-content. The egoist uses images of infancy and babies. But even in literary terms, the analysis is not abstract. The critic is not simply collecting images and themes but is attending to passion and relationship. Willoughby's feelings in and of love are thin and inadequate, she shows, because his feeling for himself is both infantile and intense. His is the dangerously,

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pathetically, and ludicrously displaced parental feeling, and the imagery of his inner action is important because it is part of an eloquent drama of feeling. This analysis is a straightforward example of Gillian Beer's quality, drawing as it does on established techniques of verbal analysis but dynamically and with a regard for passion and mind. Instead of isolating and collating, it regards the structure as action and process—something easier said than done, and sometimes easier done than taught, as every critic who is also a teacher knows. Most importantly, the technical insights are less interesting than the psychological insights. The part is not isolated from the fictitious whole, and the whole is seen as an aspect of human, not merely of aesthetic, experience. The critic observes that Willoughby's moral and psychological failure "is precisely the failure to take that final step to self-consciousness which involves self-criticism . . . . By making us share Sir Willoughby's stream-of-consciousness, Meredith further suggests that we all think, quite lucidly, many more thoughts then we dare scrutinise." It is the "quite lucidly" that commands us to look from his ego at our own—in other words, it is not just the expected remark about unconscious deceptions. When a comment is made on the conventional and formal role of *confidante* played by another character in *The Egoist*, literary observations are quite naturally combined with an observation about communication and emotional crisis. Gillian Beer's insights are local and psychological where Alexander Welsh's are cultural and psychological, but there is in both a personal encounter, intellectual discipline and proof. Ioan Williams sounds rather glum about modern criticism of Meredith, as he introduces *The Critical Heritage*'s[7] collection of Meredith criticism, but I can't see why. Mrs Beer's book is infinitely more appreciative and intellectually rewarding than any of the Victorian examples.

The Winged Skull: Essays on Laurence Sterne came out of the proceedings and discussions of the Sterne Bicentenary Conference, and its royalties are dedicated to the Laurence Sterne Trust for use in the restoration of Shandy Hall. Sterne himself needs no restoration—unlike Meredith—and this learned and lively book not only appropriately celebrates his rich, strange genius, but makes one feel that it must have been a splendid conference.

[7] *Meredith: The Critical Heritage*. Ed. IOAN WILLIAMS. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £5.50.

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The essays are of course not evenly accomplished—they could hardly be that—but even those chiefly contributing social insights about Sterne's reputation in Europe, America and Asia are packed with vivid information, like the mention of the Japanese Sternian novel by Natsume Soseki called *I am a Cat*. Once again, the very best essays show the authors engaged with Sterne and with more than Sterne, show the critic not just baldly presenting results but revealing processes. Out of the riches I invidiously pick an essay by Jean-Jacques Mayoux on Sterne's time-sense, and two essays on Sterne's modernity, by Robert Gorham Davies and Denis Donaghue, who both do what has often been done as they relate Sterne's formal openness, self-consciousness and fluidity to experiments in modern fiction, but do it with freshness and originality.

Robert Gorham Davies needs to keep to the text in his discussion of Sterne's dramatised and explicit relation between word and thought, but he never over-reads, and he has a firm but important sense of the futility of mythopoeic criticism applied to his author. Denis Donaghue is especially good on the structure of sensibility, both in *Tristram Shandy* and in the less controlled *Sentimental Journey*. He is extremely good on his text, which he places firmly in the non-aesthetic world. His practical criticism of action, language, and character, and his judgment depend equally on this critical enlargement. He deals calmly, for instance, with Leavis' reasonable and not insensitive charge that Sterne is a pretentious and nasty trifler—and if any fans think this is an entirely unreasonable charge they will have to come to terms with the *Journal To Eliza* as well as with the novels. Using Tolkien's distinction—perhaps not one very acutely named—between the primary world and the secondary, which roughly correspond to social and inner experience, Donaghue puts forward a Sternian moment of collision between the two worlds which releases "a fine moral awareness." The primary world may suddenly seem responsive to the imaginative need, dream, or fiction, and the division breaks down. Or "the fictive laws" of the secondary world may "chime, for a moment, with the daily laws of earth" as in the memorable moment when the Treaty of Utrecht is signed, in the quotidian, public world, and Toby's fortifications, products and imagery of the private dream, are left idle. Toby suggests blowing up the Dunkirk machines and harbour and embarking "for England", and there comes the moving colli-

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sion of the two worlds: " 'We are there,' quoth the corporal, recollecting himself. 'Very true,' said my uncle Toby—looking at the church." Donaghue finds moving here what he finely calls the "lack of shame." One world is not rebuked by the other, but they are linked by "the flow of feeling." He suggests that although this is a trifle, the feeling is not trifling, nor the art which brings together so movingly "the subjective world of hobby-horses and auxiliary verbs, and the historical world in which wars are fought, treaties are signed, and an English queen is shy with her allies." I was inclined to think that George Eliot had been the first to analyse this flow between public world and private fantasy; Donaghue proves me wrong, in a way which is fully responsive to Sterne's sense of this species of psychological encounter and to its significance in all our lives. Once more, the critic takes us the more movingly and securely into literature because of his capacity to move beyond it. Once more, he renders the text and the texture, with a fidelity to both sides of a personal encounter.

THESE CRITICS represent formal and verbal criticism at its best, not walled up in a feeble citadel, but rather suggestive of unwalled strengths. They could be claimed as allies in an attack on the category of aesthetic experience as something distinct from the structures and fictions of everyone's consciousness. There is no danger of critical biography walling off the aesthetic category, and the three biographical works in my list, the splendid *Samuel Richardson: A Biography* by T. C. Duncan Eaves and Ben D. Kimpel,[8] the rather less splendid *Anthony Trollope*, by James Pope Hennessy,[9] and the interesting *The Singular Anomaly*, by Vineta Colby,[10] face in very different ways the biographer's business of relating the life to the work. Whatever his solution, the biographer seldom pleases the critic, who both needs and eschews biography, who complains when the biographer refuses to write criticism, and when he does. James Pope Hennessy tells Trollope's story, one particularly well-documented in its terrible childhood, and like the lives of the Brontës, Thackeray, Dickens, and George Eliot, more novelistic than the actual novels. Very much more impressive in style and sensibility is the Richardson book. While the authors sound just a trifle stiff and proud in their prefatory declaration of old-fashioned critical method, their analysis of Richardson is a sound and valuable one, though I should like to suggest that more practical criticism would have made their discussions of language and character even more illuminating. I have only one small quibble: they defend Pamela against the charge of humiliating feudal self-abnegation when she curtsies to Mr B. during the wedding service, by a learned note on ritual curtsies. A closer and more lingering look at the text reveals Richardson as still exposed to the charge of offending against our present sense of dignity in sex and class. Not only does Pamela curtsy to her lord and master, she says something which is no part of any ritual except the novel's own, "Thank you, Sir."

Richardson is better served than Trollope, but the Trollopians are very much in evidence. Pamela Hansford Johnson and C. P. Snow contribute slight but interesting comments to the collection of rather slight pieces in *On the*

[8] *Samuel Richardson: A Biography*. By T. C. DUNCAN EAVES and BEN D. KIMPEL. Oxford University Press, £6.50.

[9] *Anthony Trollope*. By JAMES POPE HENNESSY. Jonathan Cape, £5.

[10] *The Singular Anomaly*. By VINETA COLBY. New York University Press, $10, paper $3.50; University of London Press, £4.40, paper £1.65.

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On the Novel

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Novel: A Present for Walter Allen,[11] and Ruth apRoberts has written a book whose calm, edge, and laconic compression seem absolutely congenial to Trollope's control, matter-of-factness, and charm.[12] The author of *Trollope: Artist and Moralist* appears to me to share a certain baldness with her author. I find this baldness not only in her business-like packaging-up of structural, symbolic, and verbal criticism as over and done with, but in her claims, modestly phrased but scarcely modest in their implications, for her author and what he has to teach us in the discovery of new critical approaches. Many of her observations suffer from the lack of close and sustained analysis, whether of language, events, or character. She admires Geoffrey Tillotson's observation that Trollope had an inconspicuous, natural style, but uses it unanalytically, in assertion. If we happen to accept the view, we are taken no further, except in odd local patches, and if we disagree with it, there is no question of being shown its source and meaning. I am not shaken in my view that Trollope has a very mannered style, and that the mannerism can be controlled and eloquent, but also archly evasive and inflated. Mrs apRoberts is excellent on Trollope's irony and his ideas, especially in her account of his Ciceronian ethic. But to compare her judgment and examples of Trollope's psychology with those of Welsh on Dickens or Donaghue on Sterne is, I think, to feel that there is a vast distance between the authors and between their critics. Mrs apRoberts praises Trollope for the following insight in the portrait of Archdeacon Grantly and his wife, "his wife took an unfair advantage of him by keeping her temper", and for revealing the Countess de Courcy's *Schadenfreude* in "liking to hear of girls being engaged and then losing their husbands." She observes: "We are inclined to enjoy these things, and ticket them as merely funny. But they are not *mere* at all. They are very important, and they show Trollope's quality, because they are really brilliant discoveries in psychology, recorded in baldest terms." To call such perceptions new and brilliant seems to oversell Trollope, a man of considerable gifts but scarcely emerging triumphantly from the comparison with Balzac or Tolstoy. There is a baldness both in author and in critic. In the critic it has the dis-

[11] *On the Novel: A Present for Walter Allen on his Sixtieth Birthday*. Ed. B. S. BENEDIKZ. Dent, £2.50.

[12] *Trollope: Artist and Moralist*. By RUTH apROBERTS. Chatto & Windus, £2.25.

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advantage that she doesn't substantiate her insights and judgments. In the author it has the disadvantage that he doesn't substantiate through the continuities of the secondary world, in the stream of passion and intelligence, those insights he retails and tells. Mrs apRoberts also praises him for showing the exhilarating effects of the hunting-field. One could argue about her remark that hunting joins the classes, but I doubt very much if the comparison with the Russian novelists or the tribute to vitality could survive a close and held analysis of Trollope's hunting-scenes and those in *Anna Karenina*. Particularity is important, in novel and criticism.

I MUST NOT SUGGEST that the rejection of the formal analysis is the only cause of unsubstantiated judgment. William Bellamy's study of *The Novels of Wells, Bennett and Galsworthy: 1890-1910*[13] is so turgidly and obscurely written that it shows up Ruth apRoberts' clarity and wit as positive virtues. It also is full of the kind of overselling and exotic judgment that is entirely compatible with structural and mythopoeic criticism. One example will have to do: Galsworthy's *Jocelyn* has a "neo-Vitalist structure." William Bellamy does include lavish quotation, and even comments on it, but his is the kind of practical criticism that shows the creative critic dangerously ascendant, not to say rampant. He sees that Galsworthy's language is crude and melodramatic, but vindicates it: "The melodramatic clichés emphasise the representative quality of Jocelyn's sense that life is elsewhere, away from the finite personal present, in the infinite places of the earth." In celebrating the virtues of the creative and personal encounter with literature, we must remember that criticism can be too creatively personal, and needs the restraint of judgment and the submissiveness of negative capability in shaping its fictions.

[13] *The Novels of Wells, Bennett and Galsworthy: 1890-1910*. By WILLIAM BELLAMY. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £2.75.

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A Shakespeare for All Seasons

By M. M. Mahood

"IF HE IS ANOTHER NATURE," Frank Kermode asks in a quatercentennial lecture on Shakespeare, "why cannot we say of him, as Whitehead said of nature itself, that 'Nature is patient of interpretation in terms of laws that happen to interest us' for 'the truth must be seasonable'?" Centennial lecture audiences, ranging between the ingenuous and the over-sophisticated in a way that Shakespeare would have understood, invite a measure of ambivalence on the speaker's part. From the print on the page, it is not easy to decide how ironic Professor Kermode was being. But can it ever make sense to regard Shakespeare's plays as another nature? And can our perceptions about them be seasonable and remain true? These two questions, together with a cruder one raised by the ambiguity of tone here—"Can lectures survive the printing?"—are bound to pursue and perplex anyone reading the most recent batch of Shakespeare criticism.

That there may have been an edge of irony to Professor Kermode's voice is suggested by the tenor of the other papers which he has brought together under the title of *Shakespeare, Spenser, Donne*.[1] A Shakespeare play may be part of the whole phenomenal show that is "nature," but Professor Kermode does not anywhere forget that there is "an art/ That nature makes." For him, Shakespeare is the great artificer, "a speculative, interested man, a man of great intellectual force, who employs that force in poetry." In Spenser's poetry too he delights in all that is "artificial" about the many-faceted allegory of *The Faerie Queene*, in which the pagan mysteries as they were understood in the Renaissance blend with the more esoteric sort of biblical exegesis. Here is a critic so confidently and courteously at home in the iconographical by-ways of the sixteenth century that we too begin to fancy that we are versed in Ficino and Leone Ebreo and so may forget that the "truth" he is demonstrating—for example that the Cave of Mammon is an initiation into heroic virtue and not just a temptation to avarice—could be called unseasonable in the sense of being essentially a sixteenth-century reading and not an interpretation through laws which happen to interest our twentieth-century minds. But then Spenser is a poets' and a scholars' poet, and there is no specifically modern approach to the content of his epic, any more than there is to the subject matter, as distinct from the pure painterly qualities, of Giorgione's "La Tempesta."

A reader who thinks Shakespeare's work deserves the same sort of approach—respect for Shakespeare's controlling intelligence as an Elizabethan rather than as our contemporary—is likely to react strongly to two recent books by English emigré critics in California. Frederick Turner's *Shakespeare and the Nature of Time*[2] will give him great pleasure. A very Oxford book—one could name its critical godparents without reading the acknowledgements—it handles difficult abstract ideas in a modest, lucid and sometimes illuminating way. We might complain that Mr Turner takes a more aerial view of "pattern" than anyone should in writing about the performing arts—Shakespeare's basic awareness of time must have been of the two hours' traffic of the stage—and that the omission of *Antony and Cleopatra* is almost incredible. But this is a book in which sense and sensibility prevail.

THE SAME READER, at some quite early point in his reading of *Shakespeare's Sexual Comedy*,[3] is likely to grow apoplectic. Perhaps he will not hold Professor Richmond responsible for the blurb ("To a generation jaded by the sterilities of textural criticism, he reasserts that Shakespeare has much to teach us about love"), but uneasiness grows with the gluey epigraph from George Stewart, begins to simmer at the dedication to the Goddess of Good Sense, bubbles at an introduction (here called Early Warning) about "the swaggering ghost of Che Guevara," and boils over at a

[1] *Shakespeare, Spenser, Donne.* By FRANK KERMODE. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £1.50.

[2] *Shakespeare and the Nature of Time: Moral and Philosophical Themes in some Plays and Poems of Shakespeare.* By FREDERICK TURNER. Oxford University Press, £1.90.

[3] *Shakespeare's Sexual Comedy: a Mirrow for Lovers.* By HUGH M. RICHMOND. Bobbs-Merrill, $7.50.

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first chapter entitled "Shakespeare's Relevance." Shakespeare is relevant, according to Professor Richmond, because his sonnets show, and his plays confirm, his view of sex to be "a wise hypocrisy"; he warns lovers to take short views, expect little, and refrain from taking themselves seriously. It is hard to take seriously this excellent avuncular advice, if it is offered as the actual experience of Shakespeare's plays; Posthumus and Timon, Romeo and Antony, Pandarus and Angelo, between them surely indicate that Shakespeare shared all the common human confusion about sex and knew what it was to be passion's slave. The fact that he could make superb dramatic poetry out of this particular quarrel with himself does not entitle us to turn him into a marriage guidance counsellor. But then Professor Richmond's prime concern is not with the plays. He is troubled by the *mores* of Californian campuses. Daily suicide attempts, mounting gonorrhoea figures, almost automatic divorce: anyone confronted with these calamities is justified in fighting them with any means at his disposal—even the pillorying of Romeo for failing to see life in Mercutio's terms. The thing is to keep talking. I once prevented a distraught stranger from jumping out of a train by leading him, point by point, through Milton's arguments for divorce. But the fact that we reached King's Cross without disaster throws no light whatever on Milton as a controversialist.

The reader who cares, then, for Shakespeare's plays as the artefacts of an intelligence that we should not twist to serve our own concerns will find Mr Turner's book civilised and Professor Richmond's somewhat barbarous. But he will also have to admit that *Shakespeare's Sexual Comedy* calls forth an alert response, whereas *Shakespeare and the Nature of Time* lulls us into a secure and not very productive acquiescence. Mr Turner tells us that much of the intellectual structure of his book was provided by *Four Quartets*: surely a point of reference remote from the mental climate most of us must endure in the '70s. So his careful distinctions between subjective, objective and natural time in *As You Like It*, however Augustinian they may be, seem a chilly reading of the play; whereas Professor Richmond, in treating of the same play, can delight us by his account of how Shakespeare uses Rosalind's role-playing to explore bisexuality. Here as in quite a number of other places he has hit on a truth that is proved on our pulses by its seasonableness. And this is a reminder that Frank Kermode's quotation from Whitehead was not wholly or even predominantly ironical. However much we deplore and fight mere trendy fictions about Shakespeare, we have to acknowledge that the effective critical truths about him are the seasonable ones that speak to our condition.

Nothing shows up this need for seasonableness more emphatically than the reissue of H. B. Charlton's *Shakespearean Tragedy*.[4] It is not the rearguard action which Professor Charlton fights as a devout Bradleyan against the concern of Knights, Eliot, Leavis and others with the plays as dramatic poems, which makes these Clark lectures a period piece. We have come to value Bradley more in the past twenty-five years, and some of the textural critics, as Professor Richmond would call them, have not worn so well after all. What renders the truths of these lectures unseasonable—and true they patently are, in the sense of ringing true, of being faithful to the speaker's attentive experience of the plays—is their interpretation of Shakespeare in terms of laws that, for better or worse, no longer interest us. No one who has undergone the dislocating theatrical experiences of the last twenty-five years can be much concerned with the abstraction of Great Tragedy as "an apotheosis of the spirit of man," a kind of Platonic ideal not attained by *Romeo and Juliet*, "a tragic drama, stillborn" or by *Antony and Cleopatra*, the product of an inner eye that is dimming.

THEODORE WEISS tells us, in *The Breath of Clowns and Kings*,[5] that his mentors are the poet-critics such as Coleridge, Eliot and Auden. His own prose has other origins; perhaps its genealogy runs through Lamb, Swinburne, de la Mare. "We have here a nation's gay flamboyancy and the self-confidence such uncurbed flamboyancy admits. It is as though English itself, discovering what complex, various glory it could be, were kicking up its bright be-ribboned heels. In whom better than in Shakespeare." Professor Weiss moves through the earlier part of the Shakespeare canon at this decidedly leisurely pace, with the result that the reader's eye begins to slide over the commentary connecting

[4] *Shakespearean Tragedy*. By H. B. CHARLTON. Cambridge University Press, £1.75, $6.

[5] *The Breath of Clowns and Kings: Shakespeare's Early Comedies and Histories*. By THEODORE WEISS. London, Chatto & Windus, £3; New York, Atheneum, $10.

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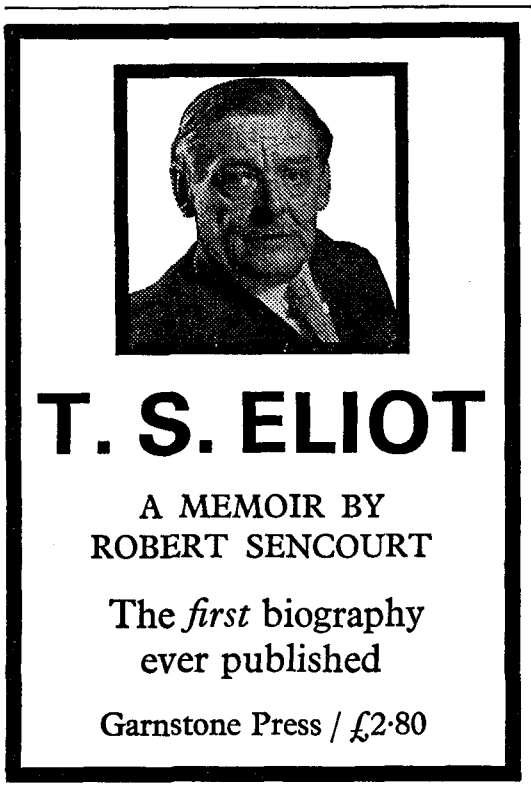
the generous quotations from Shakespeare. This is an unfair thing to do, not only because as a poet Professor Weiss has perceptive things to say about Shakespeare's choice of a word or a construction, but because a hasty scanning overlooks the immense pleasure that his presentation of the plays must have given to the large extra-mural audience who first heard it, and who might never have tackled them for themselves. We have all in our time been led kindly up to Shakespeare by lectures such as these.

There is a sense in which the publication of *any* formal lectures is unseasonable in the seventies. The authority of the rostrum is questioned like any other. The books about Shakespeare we best respond to are those that have arisen from the talk of equals, from the play of mind that expresses itself in a supple and exploratory prose. Strangely enough Coleridge, a prestige lecturer if ever there was one, was a master of this exploratory manner. One must be very grateful to R. A. Foakes[6] for bringing us a little closer to Coleridge's original voice in his lectures of 1811 and 1812. Hitherto we have had these only in a much "improved" version, published in 1856, of John Payne Collier's transcript of his shorthand notes. Professor Foakes gives us the transcript itself, now in the Folger Shakespeare Library. We are still not quite within earshot of Coleridge. Collier's original shorthand notes, which survive for two of the lectures, were far from complete, and had to be filled out from memory once he got home. But the eager young reporter of 1811 had much greater respect for what Coleridge actually said than had the precariously eminent Collier of 1856; and Professor Foakes' introduction makes clear how often the later additions and "improvements," while not material in themselves, change the tone of a passage from (to use the Coleridgean distinction) "I-thinking" to "Thoughts on Shakespeare."

I-thinking, the undogmatic response of an alert intelligence to Shakespeare's own creative intellect, is to be found in two recent books on Shakespeare's tragedies: H. A. Mason's *Shakespeare's Tragedies of Love*[7] and Nigel Alexander's book on *Hamlet* called *Poison, Play and Duel*.[8] The subtitle of Mr Mason's book is "An examination of the possibility of common readings of *Romeo and Juliet, Othello, King Lear, Antony and Cleopatra*." Discussions of the plays scene by scene with extra-mural classes and subsequently at Oxford and Cambridge have conviced him of the possibility of such a common reading, the consensus of informed minds. This is a very 18th-century approach, and Johnson often comes to mind as Mr Mason comments on Shakespeare at work, deploring here and applauding there, concerned with the plays as the product of an intelligence that is not so angelic that it cannot abide our question. Sadly, the general effect is rather censorious; in none of these four plays does Shakespeare appear to Mr Mason to be writing at the full imaginative stretch of *Macbeth. Romeo and Juliet* is full of brilliant local effects, the results of Shakespeare's opportunism in adapting Brooke's prosy poem, *Romeus and Juliet. Othello* is even more of an improvisation; a dangerous facility leads Shakespeare sensationally to be-monster Othello without ever establishing his nobility for us, and he fails to develop the deeper complexities of his subject hinted at in the

[6] *Coleridge on Shakespeare: the Text of the Lectures of 1811-12.* Edited by R. A. Foakes. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £2.50.
[7] *Shakespeare's Tragedies of Love.* By H. A. Mason. Chatto & Windus, £2.25.
[8] *Poison, Play and Duel: a Study in Hamlet.* By Nigel Alexander. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £2.80.



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Willow Scene. Nor, in *King Lear* and *Antony and Cleopatra*, is Shakespeare fully prepared to give his mind to what he is doing; poetical spell-binding and *coups de théâtre* do duty for the guiding intelligence of his greatest work.

IT IS A TRIBUTE to Mr Mason's tone and method that it is possible to disagree with almost all he says and still enjoy his argument enormously. This is because the play of mind involved in the book's method of composition keeps Mr Mason aware of the reader's responses and reactions on every page. But when it is all over, there remains the uneasy, even resentful feeling that his handling of Shakespeare's improvisations has resulted in a distortion; the word is not too strong in view of such statements as "it will be for the reader to decide whether he wishes to continue to class *Othello* among Shakespeare's tragedies." Shakespeare did, of course, ad-lib shamelessly, and it is even possible he never troubled to re-read his own *Othello*. For an actor-playwright, composition is a kind of performance in slow motion; one could name half a dozen eminent playwrights who scarcely trouble to blot a line. To readers whose norm is the novel, it is reprehensible of Shakespeare to make it all up as he goes along. Their common sense (in the Augustan meaning of the word) is offended when Desdemona, who has broken her father's heart in Act I, claims in Act III to have known no sorrow. It takes an uncommon reader to see in Shakespeare's improvisations, not an intellectual abdication, but the energy of an essentially theatrical intelligence. If Mr Mason were fully aware of the theatrical impact of the plays, he could never use *Macbeth* as his touchstone; actors, who regard it as an unlucky play, know only too well that it fails to move audiences with anything like the force of the four plays that are here dubbed failures.

SHAKESPEARE'S *Tragedies of Love* does not deal with *Hamlet;* yet if ever Shakespeare wrote of a tragic love it was that of Hamlet for his father. This is the central interest of Nigel Alexander's *Poison, Play and Duel*, which may well prove to be the most important and influential discussion of the play since Bradley. (I am saying this in the knowledge that every year brings its harvest of four or five hundred critical items on the play.) The

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book has a rare critical equipoise of the kind implied in the irony of Professor Kermode's remark about another nature. Dr Alexander treats Shakespeare in a "classical" way as an artificer, above all a theatrical artificer, solving in terms of brilliant stagecraft (the Ghost, the Mousetrap, the graveyard scene, the duel and Hamlet's soliloquies) a number of presentational problems, in order to clarify the problems of conduct that Hamlet shares with us. At the same time he retains a Romantic—or perhaps a "scientific"—awareness of Shakespeare as another nature, in that he approaches the play with a trust, even a reverence, that maintains that everything *tells*; this other nature makes no leaps and the critic's task as Dr Alexander conceives it is to lead us step by step through all the connecting parts of a rich and intricate design.

Though Hamlet shares his problems with us, Dr Alexander keeps in mind throughout that he shared them first with an Elizabethan audience, and he states them in Augustinian terms such as that audience would have understood. The faculties are at war in Hamlet's distracted globe. "His will leads him on to murder and even matricide. His understanding holds him back in the way which he despises when he says that 'conscience does make cowards of us all.' " That Hamlet is wrong in his interpretation of "conscience" at this point is made clear by the Mousetrap which "reveals to the audience the extent to which Hamlet does not understand himself or his own actions. Aware of a compulsion to avenge his dead father he is not aware that this desire, in as far as it requires him to play the role of Lucianus, is opposed by his memory and understanding." Only in the graveyard does Hamlet become aware of a state of mind which would have been a release from the mad dance of revenge and counter-revenge—"a vision of passionate life directed by the operation of memory and the forces of intelligence." A union of Ophelia and Hamlet might have restored health to the body politic of Denmark.

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AT THIS POINT in the argument we become aware that Nigel Alexander is in fact bringing together interpretations of Hamlet's experience in 16th-century terms and in terms of the laws that happen to interest us in the late 20th century. Half-way through reading *Poison, Play and Duel* I had to turn aside from Dr Alexander's argument that the revenge Hamlet contemplates is "barbarous and disgusting," in order to sort out a box of wartime papers. The first thing to catch my eye was a set of precise instructions issued to the Home Guard for strangling German sentries with cheese wire. They too were barbarous and disgusting; but they must have been regarded at the time as a moral imperative by thousands of good, kind men in Dad's Army. Only one generation ago audiences had no difficulty in accepting the Ghost's command, as had most audiences back to the original Globe one, as a similar imperative. Ought we to ignore this response because we live in a world without moral imperatives, where there is no respite from the vigilance of moral choice? Isn't this a very un-Elizabethan *Hamlet*? But then Shakespeare was no more an ordinary Elizabethan than Hamlet was an ordinary Elsinorean. So though I have many doubts about a Hamlet who ought not to have made up his mind, I recognise in Dr Alexander's argument the fruitful meeting of a civilised sensibility of the 20th century with one of the most civilised sensibilities of the sixteenth. The energy, the commitment of Dr Alexander's book, the fact that he has for a few years been virtually living *Hamlet*, take it far beyond a make-love-not-war trendiness into seasonable truth.

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Both these books on the tragedies are intended for readers who have thought long and hard about the plays. Some of them will be old enough to have had their first reading of Shakespeare guided by the *Companion to Shakespeare Studies* edited in 1934 by Harley Granville-Barker and G. B. Harrison. From the same publisher there now comes a new *Companion* edited by Kenneth Muir and S. Schoenbaum.[9] This time there are rightly as many American contributors as English ones. Consultation must have been difficult in this widened academic scene, and though nearly all the articles are helpful, the juxtaposition of simple surveys with closely argued specialised papers makes for bumpy reading. The newly added section surveying the whole Shakespeare corpus, for example, is a bit like a game of Heads, Bodies and Legs. J. W. Lever starts with a well-drawn account of the Poems, David Bevington adds a cramped but careful survey of Elizabethan Shakespeare but doesn't fold the paper quite right, so that plays like *Measure for Measure* get left out when it is passed to M. C. Bradbrook, who provides two legs in Jacobean hose, *Othello* and *Pericles*. When we open out the paper, the proportions are very odd indeed. And this multiple authorship results in some sad omissions; the linguistic section now takes in Shakespeare's rhetoric, unnoticed in 1934, but says nothing about his equally important use of the diction of common life. Yet multiple authorship seems inevitable in a book like this, now that Shakespearean studies are so specialised. T. J. King's monograph is an example of such specialisation.[10] It meticulously presents all the playhouse manuscript evidence for specific features of the Elizabethan stage. As scholars have long suspected, most Elizabethan plays could be staged on an acting space before two doors or openings. One interesting point that emerges is that when an upper level is called for there is quite often the need for visible access to it by some sort of steps; for example, in the base court scene of *Richard II* (too early to be included here). One would like to know more about elevation on the Elizabethan stage; modern directors may be following a Shakespearean instinct when they retain a third dimension for even the barest production.

THE *Companion* in its up-to-date form is a good guide for anyone beginning to watch and read Shakespeare with attention and pleasure. Until he has grown so at home with the text that he can share the play of mind in the books of Mr Mason and Dr Alexander, the same reader will do well to stick to the plays, with recourse to the occasional *Casebook* for a controversial play. John Wain's collection on *Othello*[11] is a particularly successful one; he and his publishers have had the skill and luck to prevail on the writers of virtually all the good modern essays on the play to let them be reprinted here. John Wain surveys the findings and adds some *aperçus* of his own in a crisp and lively introduction.

[9] *A New Companion to Shakespeare Studies.* Edited by KENNETH MUIR and S. SCHOENBAUM. Cambridge University Press, £3.60, paper £1.20.

[10] *Shakespearean Staging, 1599-1642.* By T. J. KING, Harvard University Press, $6.75; Oxford University Press, £3.25.

[11] *Shakespeare: Othello.* A Casebook edited by JOHN WAIN. Macmillan, £1.80, paper, 60p.

Swains of Solyma, Advise

By William Walsh

THE VARIETY of books heaped around me as I write illustrates the cat's lives (dog's life, too, sometimes) led by criticism: a submarine creature's sunk under the ocean of North-American scholarship in *Blake's Visionary Forms Dramatic*; gritty Cambridge tutorial's in *John Donne's Poetry*; publicity hand-outs in *A Choice of Shelley's Verse*; scientist's hobby-horse in *Shelley: His Thought and Work*; professional "contribution" to learning in *The Science of Aspects*; both guide and scene-setting in *S. T. Coleridge*; modern poet mulling over his life and times in *Owls and Artificers*; lambently enthusiastic teacher's in *Poetry Towards Novel*; and so on, and on. If it can be all these, what can it possibly be itself? Nothing it seems more than reading, the certain and authentic act of reading. But readers themselves, as Coleridge explained, now have both the irresponsibility of power and a diversity of gifts. On the first head he said:

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> Poets and Philosophers, rendered diffident by their very number, addressed themselves to "*learned* readers"; then, aimed to conciliate the graces of "the *candid* reader"; till, the critic still rising as the author sunk, the amateurs of literature collectively were erected into a municipality of judges, and addressed as THE TOWN. And now finally, all men being supposed able to read and all readers able to judge, the multitudinous PUBLIC, shaped into personal unity by the magic of abstraction, sits nominal on the throne of criticism.[1]

On the second (at the beginning of one of his lectures in 1811):

> Readers may be divided into four classes:
> 1. Sponges, who absorb all they read, and return it nearly in the same state, only a little dirtied.
> 2. Sand-glasses, who retain nothing, and are content to get through a book for the sake of getting through the time.
> 3. Strain-bags, who retain merely the dregs of what they read.
> 4. Mogul diamonds, equally rare and valuable, who profit by what they read, and enable others to profit by it also.

One couldn't apply these undeniably cogent categories to much of the work in hand without gratuitous rudeness, even though willing to admit hints of sponge, sand-glass and strain-bag in oneself. On the other hand it is pretty clear that there won't be many mogul diamonds sitting nominal on the throne of criticism. A more immediately helpful point of departure is the electric statement of Blake, which the critic should tell over like a rosary, quoted in one of the more agreeable essays,[2] that by John Sutherland, in *Blake's Visionary Forms Dramatic*:[3]

> The great and golden rule of art, as well as of life, is this: That the more distinct, sharp, and wiry the bounding line, the more perfect the work of art; and the less keen and sharp, the greater is the evidence of weak imitation, plagiarism, and bungling. . . . The want of this determinate and bounding form evidences the want of idea in the artist's mind.

And "the want" not only in the artist's mind but in the critic's mind, too, because criticism being neither science determined by public experiment, nor philosophy bound by laws of superannuation, if it is not an art is nothing; and if it is an art it is the art of reading, as long as we don't omit from our conception of reading what (Wilbur Sanders reminds us) Wordsworth called the "exertion of co-operative power in the mind of the reader."

WILBUR SANDERS may not be a mogul diamond but he is surely a valuable industrial one, cutting a precise and rigorous, as well as a most useful, line. The originality of his spare, full book, *John Donne's Poetry*,[4] lies in his being able to read Donne himself, by himself and for himself, since as he points out "it often comes about that when a writer is conceded classic status he stops being read —at least in any important sense of the verb 'to read'." Mr Sanders is responsive to the complex energy of Donne's poetry, and capable of defining what Coleridge called its "intenseness and peculiarity of thought": sensitive to the bounding life, that is, and able to draw the wiry line. One example:

> As far as I can discover, it's not uncommon to come away from "The Canonization" with a feeling of distaste. But it's the *why* of that distaste that concerns me. It seems connected somehow with a feeling that the complexities of response in which Donne is dealing are self-indulgent, wanton, factitious—as if there were some invisible but decisive threshold which the poem crosses, after which the habit of irony changes its nature and becomes a *game* in dubious taste. Once that threshold is crossed, the poem dissipates itself. The irony becomes *dis*integrative.

To come away with a feeling, particularly an appropriate one, and to enquire into its *why*, seems to me a fine application of Blake's counsel and it is certainly one that works right through Wilbur Sanders' book, and in particular in its highly intelligent, unenervated reaction to the poems. The result is that the Donne he advances for our attention

> . . . is not a spectacular pyrotechnician who is continually startling us out of *our* wits, as a way of reconciling us to *his*. His surprises are of a more deeply satisfying kind—"that comprehension and expanse of thought which at once fills the whole mind, and of which the first effect is sudden astonishment, and the second rational admiration"—Johnson's version of the sublime.

It will also be clear, even from these few phrases, that his writing has a tutorial intimacy of talk, enticing, provoking, rebuking, which to me is engaging but to some may be irritating. It is not so much, they may feel, that he has his hand in your pocket as that he is shaking his finger, bending his brow at you, and patting you on the head.

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[1] *Biographia Literaria*, III.

[2] Others are by John E. Grant on "Night Thoughts," and Irene Tayler on "Metamorphoses of a Favorite Cat."

[3] *Blake's Visionary Forms Dramatic*. Edited by DAVID V. ERDMAN and JOHN E. GRANT. Princeton University Press, $20, £9.50.

[4] *John Donne's Poetry*. By WILBUR SANDERS. Cambridge University Press, £2.60.

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THE HEIRS OF DONNE AND JONSON,[5] is the helpfully self-explanatory title of a book which deals with bite and sympathy with Suckling, Herrick, Carew, Henry King, George Herbert, Richard Crashaw, Henry Vaughan and Andrew Marvell. Joseph H. Summers, the author, is a critic unusual in his modesty, an Attlee of the profession. His book, he says, is a rewritten version of lectures given at Oxford during the 1967 Hilary Term. If he weren't modest, he would hardly have made so much of that: the reader does prefer his books to be written rather than rewritten. Admiration for his modesty, however, tends to dribble away as one trudges down the list of those he is indebted to. He has *not* mentioned the midwife at his birth. Once away from the prelims, on the other hand, Mr Summers' temperate, conscientiously qualified statement is as admirable as the assumptions and aims informing his criticism are humane and pointed. He believes that "if one is chiefly interested in poetry rather than writing examinations or defending theses" (and he might have added, preparing lectures), "one should probably spend as little time as possible defining 'a poem' or 'a Renaissance poem', or even 'a metaphysical' or 'a seventeenth-century poem' and as much as possible reading all the extant poetry—and prose—written by interesting individual poets. My conclusions are therefore predictably (and perhaps hopelessly) pluralistic . . . ." His is the good kind of American (or any) scholarship, the kind British scholars are constantly claiming as characteristic of their production in contrast to American ponderosity, learned but never shuffling or coughing, transparently clear, restrained and sagacious.

CRITICISM BREATHES, even hops and jumps about a bit, in Joseph Summers' sympathetic scholarship. Quite a different kind from his offers itself in the sumptuously produced *Blake's Visionary Forms Dramatic*, in which twenty specialists combine to explicate Blake's "difficult and radical form of mixed art", as Northrop Frye called it in an "eight-page essay on poetry and design in William Blake", in 1951, a piece so praised

[5] *The Heirs of Donne and Jonson*. By JOSEPH H. SUMMERS. Chatto & Windus, £1.90.

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and appealed to it must constitute the doctrinal basis of the present many-handed work. Much of the writing in this book is of a technically specialised type—and not only in an essay entitled "Orc as a Fiery Paradigm of Poetic Torsion". A simple item of information about the sequence of the essays becomes: "Moral and judgmental considerations, however, properly determine the climactic positioning of the respectively urban and agrarian sermons that conclude the volume." This thickness of texture, and a sense the reader has of being admitted to a society, arcane and sought-after, make him feel he is being baptised in turtle soup.

In any case I should want to question the fundamental belief of this massive assemblage of learning. Like Wilbur Sanders' pupils after "The Canonization" I come away with a feeling of distaste, and when I enquire into the why of it, I find myself wholly unconvinced that Blake's was a double art like opera (if indeed that is one), with each of the two elements equally important and requiring a parallel understanding. (No doubt this is so for the historical character of Blake, and no doubt Blake thought this about himself.) His pictorial art seems to me not less entangled in his period than his contemporary Fuseli's; and as for his "thought", it is as much crazy as coherent, a glossary on a fanatic's mysticism. The art of Blake which matters is the art of poetry. Contrast in a plate reproduced in this book the paradisal "The Sick Rose" and the coloured clutter around it. And for all his passion for linearity, the wiry line in Blake is the poetic not the pictorial one, which seems to me, in fact, often floppy and obese.

How MARSHY the terrain of these background books which leave the reader so frequently with little ground underfoot and less for hope, at least if he has it in mind to grasp an actual poem, play or novel of the writer in question! It is a comfort, even a godsend, then, to welcome *S. T. Coleridge*,[6] the best of such books for many a long day on a subject eminently fitting to be put into context. It supplies quantities of apt information on this heavenly, most human writer, while the mass of knowledge is made buoyant by the critical intelligence of a notable set of scholars. It includes intimately sensitive essays by John Beer on the supernatural poems and by R. L. Brett on the flawed, significant relationship with Wordsworth, a treatment of his metaphysics by Dorothy Emmet which is both comprehensible and sensible, a magisterial essay on Coleridge's religion by Basil Willey, the master of English Coleridgeans, and an elegant essay by George Whalley, from Canada, Coleridge's transatlantic home, which performs the critic's necessary function of humane educator.

Coleridge is well-served, too, by the patience and sobriety of Patricia M. Ball.[7] (Is there perhaps some devious relationship between the attractiveness of the criticised and the quality of the criticism?) Miss Ball's theme is the intensely visual sense possessed by Coleridge, Ruskin and Hopkins, and she seeks to define its differences and the influence on each of the fine arts and the experimental sciences in an effort to stitch all this into a pattern of influence and reaction. She has a shrewd sense of what is going on in the technique of observation of each of these three writers, but her insistence on treating them as truly comparable betrays a disharmony in standards, "the animating presences" as Henry James called them, behind her responses. What Coleridge's gluttonous eye did with the cat's back or the urine in the chamber-pot may be in its creative observation not unlike Hopkins's strenuous notation, but it is different in kind from the florid and essentially passive repetition of detail in *Modern Painters*. These writers belong to different orders of significance and scholars who insist on allotting them to a single, Platonic category do so only by bleaching out of their scholarship one of the essential constituents of criticism.

One missing also in the swirling, sensitive *Preludes to Vision*[8] by Thomas A. Vogler, who insists on tumbling together such disparate substances as Blake's *Milton*, Wordsworth's *The Prelude*, Keats' *The Fall of Hyperion*, and Hart Crane's *Bridge*. This is an undertaking which seems to imply pretty strongly that these poets are in some way or other comparable. Mr Vogler quarrels with the view of Hart Crane's *Bridge* commonly held by respectable critics, as he calls them, that it is a magnificent failure; what would he think of one who takes it simply to be a failure? There is also in his manner an almost menacing air of portentousness. Does one go to a professional critic for the attitude indicated in the first few lines in this book? "This book grew

[6] *S. T. Coleridge*. Edited by R. L. BRETT. G. Bell & Sons, £3.50.
[7] *The Science of Aspects*. By PATRICIA M. BALL. The Athlone Press, £2.50.
[8] *Preludes to Vision*. By THOMAS A. VOGLER. University of California Press, $7.50, £3.60.

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from musing in solitude over a number of years. During those years there were many who helped make my life, the context of those musings, rich in the kinds of experience that enable one to recognise in a poem the completion of a human relationship." What can one say to this except, well—yes, or what can one do but wonder about Mr Vogler's extra-contextual musings? Away from Hart Crane on the one hand and from his more vatic musings on the other, Mr Vogler proves himself to be a perceptive and almost painfully caring critic. He believes that there is a group of poems in which "the epic struggle is the attempt to write an epic, or the preparation for writing one, and the crucial effort derives from the need to maintain the hope that poetry fulfils for modern man in society the function it served when the early epics were written. The result of attempts of this sort is a group of long poems concerned more with poetry and poetry writing than with the 'subject' in the traditional sense." Descended from the clouds, he very much has his feet on the earth, and responsive, feeling feet they are. His readings of Blake, Wordsworth and Keats, in spite of a habit of quoting in support of his view not only obscure academic references, but obscure academics, make a welcome kind of sinewy sense.

THE BOUNDING and lively response, the wiry line of analysis, judgment and definition, and the implicit standard, "the sincerities, the lucidities, the utilities that stand behind it": these are the elements of criticism, the articulated act of reading. There is not much need to call upon the elements of criticism in respect of *Shelley: His Thought and Work*,[9] the second edition of a book described in *Essays in Criticism* in 1960 as "the standard introduction to Shelley for schools and universities." If that is a fact—but can it possibly be?—it offers an even sadder outlook for Shelley's poetry in those institutions than one had assumed. Mr King-Hele's *finesse* in dealing with literary delicacies may be gauged from two of his comments on the "Ode to the West Wind." "That opening, O Wild West Wind, is a famous example of alliteration, and there is more to follow." And a little later: "F. R. Leavis, for example, completely misinterpreted the lines because he failed to distinguish between the

[9] *Shelley: His Thought and Work*. By DESMOND KING-HELE. Macmillan, £4.

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fractostratus and cirrus clouds. And presumably he has not erred alone." Presumably not. Mr King-Hele is a Fellow of the Royal Society, but if this book represents one culture I am in favour not just of two cultures, or twenty-two, but two hundred and two.

STEPHEN SPENDER'S neat collection of Shelley's poetry, *A Choice of Shelley's Verse*,[10] includes not only the more ectoplasmic poems but those marvellous fragments so bracingly free of the infection of unstoppable Romantic fluency. Mr Spender seems to be in favour of Shelley—and why not?—but unwilling to say so, and this ambiguity of posture is reflected in a nervously gulping prose, even in a certain wobbliness of syntax: "And Shelley lived his life as Godwinian philosopher, spiritual lover, out of the same imagination as he lived and wrote poetry: an imagination revolutionising society, moving into human affairs, public and private, and which might control—when men came to 'imagine that which we know'—even science and political economy." Moreover, he leaves us in the end with a very odd Shelley, imaginative and formless, inadequate and magnificent, whose best poetry is apparently not verbal at all:

> . . . It may be said, I think, that his imagination is greater than the forms he uses and that his language, though nearly always extraordinary and sometimes magnificent, manages often to be inadequate at the same time. Words and images fly off his impetuous stream of thought like fragments shattered by it, so that it is possible to think of the imagination as being separate from words and forms used, just as one can sometimes think of the idea in a work of Beethoven as being greater than the music.

If one had worried about the general injustice to Shelley in the want of weight in these two books, one's anxiety on that score is more than allayed by Earl R. Wasserman's massive *Shelley: A Critical Reading*;[11] no lack of it here either in learning or avoirdupois. Professor Wasserman believes in reading the part through the whole and the whole in the light of each part. His gnomic version of this sage and comparatively straightforward counsel runs like this:

> To commit oneself to literary interpretation is necessarily to enter the unending hermeneutic circle, with its promise of progressive revelation. Part and whole being interdependent, the full meaning of the part is contingent on its role in the totality, but the nature and significance of the totality are functions of its parts. The interpreter therefore alternates between partial comprehension of a literary datum and what it implies of the significant form of the whole made up of its component data, widening and refining his understanding of the literary text as the encompassing form and the sum of the components gradually assimilate each other. The movement from part to whole is not from one datum to another but from a given detail—a recurrent word, perhaps, an image, metaphor, character, scene—to the implicit relational principle significantly governing the whole and, in turn, defining the particular functions of the details. . . .

Dr Wasserman is patently a philosopher as well as a critic, a double qualification as rare as it is suspect among critics in English. Since Coleridge perhaps only Santayana has possessed it (not that Earl Wasserman would claim to be in this league), and in neither case had the theory all that bearing on the best criticism. Nevertheless, Shelley being the kind of writer he is, even if he is more a poetic *philosophe* than a philosophic poet, there is much to be learned for any, for the few, capable of riding the breakers of Dr Wasserman's vast knowledge and surging prose, and in particular from his analysis of Shelley's scepticism about general principles and his metaphysical aspirations towards an ideal world. And yet can even this very appropriate subject withstand so much billowy explication, more than 500 tall, close-printed pages? There can be an overplus of weight, excessive light, a too overwhelming eiderdown of learning, as Shelley realised himself:

> *On the withered flower*
> *The killing sun smiles brightly.*

THE BOOKS I have spoken of look to particular authors and specific works. But there is another, larger sphere of criticism. A literary response is a total response, or as near to it as the reader can come. He brings to it all that he is, not only his immediate apprehension and sensibility, but also those crucial stabilities and regularities which are the grounds of his preferences. We cannot be completely free or utterly neutral. Just as our most primitive experience, sensation itself, carries with it the colours of our conceptions and the stain of our past, so our response to a literary work is affected, made easier or more awkward, made possible or even impossible, by the cluster of concepts and assumptions, the "animating presences", which control or influence or qualify our lives.

[10] *A Choice of Shelley's Verse*. By STEPHEN SPENDER. Faber & Faber, 50p.
[11] *Shelley: A Critical Reading*. By EARL R. WASSERMAN. The Johns Hopkins Press, $15, £7.15.

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The other books I have in front of me are meant to act directly on these formative ideas, the springs of critical activity. They have this in common, and also that their authors are all senior and distinguished. Three of them have spent their lives teaching literature to the young; the fourth, a poet, is Arnold's successor at Oxford. They are very much Elders in Sion, or better still, if I may use without irreverence another phrase from the same world, Swains of Solyma.

> *Where is this stupendous stranger?*
> *Swains of Solyma, advise.*
> *Lead me to my Master's manger,*
> *Shew me where my Saviour lies.*

These lines from Christopher Smart's splendid "Hymn on the Nativity" are given in Helen Gardner's *Religion and Literature*.[12] Her "advice" in the form of *two* sets of lectures is balanced and calm and charged with a lifetime's engagement. Her poise—it may be a trifle well-bred for the significant and agonising material she discusses—is strikingly different in stance and pace from the less smoothly gliding, the bristlier manner of Roy Fuller's deflation of the more ballooning kinds of current nonsense in *Owls and Artificers*;[13] different again from the generous enthusiasm of John Speirs' *Poetry Towards Novel*,[14] a study of the conduits, lucidly mapped and connected, through which the creative life of poetry flowed into the novel; and different too from the compressed, Johnsonian strength of W. Jackson Bates' aphoristic utterance, the product of a packed, inventive and supple mind. His book[15] is a powerful, moving argument on the way the eighteenth century prepared and rehearsed the disabling predicament of the contemporary writer: what can be done when all has been done before?

For all their differences of tone and idiom, rhythm and address, these four writers contribute their decent mite to the one essential aim of literary criticism, to further our acquaintance with that other, human, and stupendous stranger, the life of literature.

[12] *Religion and Literature*. By HELEN GARDNER. Faber & Faber, £2.
[13] *Owls and Artificers*. By ROY FULLER. André Deutsch, £1.80.
[14] *Poetry Towards Novel*. By JOHN SPEIRS. Faber & Faber, £3.75.
[15] *The Burden of the Past and the English Poet*. By W. JACKSON BATES. Chatto & Windus, £1.25.

Old, New, & Newest Criticism

By Theodore Weiss

THE OUTRAGES of the New Criticism, especially as practised in the United States, and its oppression of free, new writing have long been known to everyone, even some of those who hardly read literature, let alone criticism. For unfortunately the New Criticism prevailed. And its pervasion of the academic world to the remotest hinterland of the USA spelled its doom. Though its interest went mainly into the lyric, it is amusing to recall Pound's "Cantico Del Sole" here: "The thought of what America would be like/ If the classics had a wide circulation/ Troubles my soul." One has an awesome vision of thousands of teachers and students bent, like so many surgeons, over well-lit, trussed-down poems. Little wonder those prime victims, Yeats and Eliot, have fared poorly.

With the inevitable revulsion from this criticism came a revulsion from the kinds of literature it tended and from the kind of classroom it required. In the assumption that literature must be oral, spontaneous and zany, as well as savage, the streets moved in with cameras, loudspeakers, bells, organs, beads. The atom bomb, pollution, etc., were proclaimed as witnesses and justifications as though for the first time life was jeopardised, and a belief in lasting work was therefore scoffed at. This perfect rationalisation for indulgence was further confirmed by the speed-up everywhere, in technology, business, war, the mass media. If one can see at once what is happening almost all over the world in the frame of television and if one can take an instant, all-out trip with psychedelics and drugs, why bother with the solitary, arduous, slow labours of making and understanding "art"?

Yet the inertia of habit and convention is such that in America criticism like literature (how robust the novel must be, not to say

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immortal, that it should have resurrected so often!) has gone on unabatedly. But it is now a criticism split wide open. And a chief interest of most of the books under review is the spectrum they encompass. We move from fairly traditional attitudes, either stoutly or mildly maintained, to a shrill, at times shouting stance which would disown criticism or the thing it is presumably practising and therefore literature also.

Of the older works, those by Cesare Pavese and Delmore Schwartz, the former dead by suicide in 1950, the latter as much by desperate mental illness as anything else in 1966, are extremely valuable. Both were gifted writers primarily devoted to the creation of poetry and fiction, but criticism was immensely important to them. The story of Pavese's criticism and translating is an astonishing one. His first essay, "An American Novelist, Sinclair Lewis," appeared when Pavese was only 21; and in 1932 at 24 he had learned enough English to translate *Moby Dick*. Among his other translations were Sherwood Anderson's *Dark Laughter*, *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, Gertrude Stein's *Three Lives*, and William Faulkner's *The Hamlet*. For Pavese's engrossment in the hard facts of actual works no one can accuse him of superficiality or ignorance. But though his critical writings extend from 1930 to 1950, the significant part of them covers less than the first three years. Thereafter, though he continued to write criticism, his enthusiasm for American literature flagged. By 1947 that literature was over for him. Americans, he felt, had lost their hold on their own world and gone European.

What is perhaps most striking in this collection[1] is how little his judgments coincide with American opinion. Throughout Pavese's writing career Edgar Lee Masters and Anderson continued to be heroes for him. But though he went on valuing Theodore Dreiser, Gertrude Stein, and John Dos Passos, he soon wearied of Sinclair Lewis. Knowing his belief in the regional, the local, we can understand his enthusiasm for Anderson and Masters. But it is surprising that he had so little to say about the South, its novelists, the Fugitives, etc. Of earlier writers Melville, Twain, and Whitman impressed him most. And his splendid essays on Melville and Whitman are worthy of their subjects. A poet and surely a reader of American poetry, he no more than mentions Eliot, Pound, William Carlos Williams and others. The indifference to the first two we can understand. He was repelled by Pound and Eliot's expatriation, their cultivating much of what Europe already had. Williams, perhaps by his very local and idiosyncratic nature, eluded him. But Americans have been long prepared for such special preferences. The qualities which they take for granted in their writers are often distinctive and refreshing to foreigners. None the less, reading Pavese's memorable essays on Anderson and Masters, one is obliged to see something of what he saw.

So TOO ONE is grateful for the relevant intelligence shining forth in his 1932 essay on Melville. Recognising that "for some time we have felt a great need for rebarbarisation," he says:

> in the anti-literature fervour, there is a tendency toward the kind of primitivism which is tantamount to imbecility. Weakness, I mean, for surely it is cowardly to flee from complications to a simplistic paradise which is, after all, so understood, only one of the many refinements of civilisation . . . our hero is not Rimbaud, or Gauguin, or Stevenson, it is human wreckage.

Or he can remark:

> . . . although it [*Moby Dick*] is a work inspired by the experience of a nearly barbarian life at the ends of the earth, Melville is never a clown who sets out to pretend that he too is a barbarian and a primitive, but, dignified, courageous, he is not afraid to re-elaborate that pristine life by means of all the knowledge of the world.

And here Pavese's wry irony is at its best: "And truly I think you need less courage to front a sperm whale or a typhoon than to take the chance of passing for a pedant or a man of letters." But Melville "is not ashamed to show himself as he is, a sailor who has studied: a man of letters." In his essay on Whitman Pavese answers those who worship Whitman, Blake, and others for being mantic, purely inspired:

> What is really important is to hammer home the fact that Walt Whitman knew what he was doing, and that, in brief, like every artist who achieves anything, Walt Whitman pondered his achievement, laboured it, lived it, *intended* it.

AFTER READING the nearly 500 pages of Delmore Schwartz's essays[2] one can appreciate the respect he was held in by friends like Randall Jarrell, Robert Lowell, John Berryman. One might quarrel with the selection. Its editors no doubt meant to present a total

[1] *American Literature*. By CESARE PAVESE. Translated by Edwin Fussell. University of California Press, $6.95, £3.30.

[2] *Selected Essays of Delmore Schwartz*. Edited by DONALD A. DIKE & DAVID H. ZUCKER. University of Chicago Press, $10, £4.50.

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view of the critic. So they start with general essays on the poet and poetry, move on to the bulk of the book which is, fortunately, intensive examination of individual poets, fiction writers, and critics, and end with miscellaneous reviews, comments, and movie reviews. A better book, I believe, would have done without the first material and the last which are too exclusively addressed to their time. But once Schwartz undertakes specific writers he is indeed pertinent. And on the way he frequently illuminates the nature of good writing itself, more so than in his more pallid general essays. One misses, however, the drollery and wit, the resonance and the glow on his words that his friends admired. No doubt out of profound concern with his subject and his scrupulosity he set himself aside, put himself entirely at the disposal of his task. He asserts several times that it is "discriminating intelligence," understanding, wisdom he believed in above brilliance, sensibility, flashes of insight, sonority. His comment on R. P. Blackmur reflects this conviction:

> Blackmur's prepossession with words as words leads, as one would expect, to certain defects of critical style. There is a constant punning which is scarcely warranted in expository prose . . . . And sometimes the syntactical arrangement of the sentence or the formal succession of the argument becomes so slippery that it requires several readings; and critical prose, unlike poetry, ought not to require several readings.

We might question his rigour toward the style of criticism. But we can see that his own sobriety is not unintentional. In customary fairness he continues: "To balance this, however, Blackmur's writing is sometimes of a fine freshness, invention, genuine beauty." And his conclusion especially applies to his general critical practice:

> It is a curious notion of the very good critic which supposes that he has no defects, nor serious limitations. It would be a still more curious thing not to point them out because of one's admiration of what is positive in the critic.

Whatever his own "limitations," these essays in their classical balance, their generous reasonableness, constitute a most substantial and enduring body of work.

IN THE COLLECTIONS of Malcolm Cowley and Cleanth Brooks we meet writers who, primarily critics, have had long lives to mellow in. Cowley's[3] essays quickly convince us that he is his own man. As late as 1960 he dared to share Pavese's enthusiasm for Sherwood Anderson: "There are moments in American life to which he gave not only the first but the final expression." And in 1965 he did not hesitate to stress Van Wyck Brooks' importance. His essays win us with their cool, sensible, decent quality. Cowley is, one feels, a critic one can trust, someone not swept away by passion, partisanship, the pressures of the times, the glimmers of a moment. And though the text he is examining in his essential concern, he does recognise the work as a living creation in the middle of a world it draws on, refers to, returns to.

Thus on behalf of good sense he challenges aspects of James, Pound, Frost, and Whitman —their vanity, their failures before society. He has little sympathy for the public image Whitman cultivated of himself "as a democratic sage and prophet." It is dangerous because it has

> led to the notion that the ideal American poet or novelist is a rough-hewn aboriginal creature tallying in his works—as Whitman would say—the geographical features of the country. . . . But American writers of stature have rarely been lettered savages or extroverts flinging their arms

[3] *A Many-Windowed House.* By MALCOLM COWLEY. Edited by HENRY DAN PIPER. Southern Illinois University Press, $10, £4.65.

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> right and left to embrace multitudes; they have been, for the most part, hurt and lonely men. . . .

The latter theme, a constant one in the book, is on the whole justified. Yet since 1947 times have greatly changed. Cowley admits in a footnote that only in 1970 did he realise that "the ideas implied by 'Song of Myself' are consistently mystical, in the proper sense of the word, and that they bear a strong resemblance to various Indian philosophies. . . ." He might also recognise that the followers of Whitman, a Ginsberg, a Gary Snyder, do now in the '70s "think that democracy infers a fond and loving comradeship among men." In short, today Whitman's politics appear completely relevant to many. And since the Beats the young writer has indeed frequently longed for the image of himself as "a rough-hewn aboriginal creature," etc. Belatedly Whitman has found his comrades. Of course Cowley is on the side of brotherhood but "from above . . . not from wounds or vices or disfigurements, but from overflowing measure of health and wisdom. . . ." Yet he acknowledges Whitman's—and other great writers'—"descent into the underworld." "In his loneliness . . . he began to express a new sense of brotherhood, not with the capitalised People, but with all the crippled, diseased, abnormal, and even criminal population of a great city." This sense was at times very strong in W. C. Williams and certainly it is in a good number of the young today.

CLEANTH BROOKS, unlike Cowley, comes close in many minds to being *the* New Critic. Having, unlike most of his peers, published little poetry and fiction, he is wholly a critic and an academic. And he is an editorial half of that famous dreadnought, *Understanding Poetry*, which was as responsible as any work for disseminating the New Criticism. This present volume[4] is much concerned with the label as it represents both condemnation and legitimacy. Brooks sets out in his first two essays (their titles are revealing: "The Uses of Literature" and "The Modern Writer and his Community") to gainsay the accusation that the New Criticism is insular, impervious to anything beyond its own involvements. At the same time he insists on its basic soundness. Thus, while often enlightening us on familiar works, he does succeed in justifying close criticism and in answering charges of irresponsibility before our nuclear bomb age: the extent to which such study is not only legitimate but necessary to keep the world open and to try to reach the truth, rather than to turn literature—in our hot pursuit of certainties—into propaganda. ". . . the root of our misapprehension. . . is in our assumption that the themes of literature are generalisations to be affirmed rather than situations to be explored." He has generally salubrious, if gently put, things to say about our present excesses.

The essays themselves, however, labour under a double difficulty. Many of them, having been lectures, required aeration for easy comprehension. Thus occasionally they seem too loose, too casual, given over too much to gestures, preliminaries, exposition, and the teacherly. Moreover, close criticism, even when practised with Brooks' disarming grace, tends to be unhappy in lectures. But at his best, as in his Housman essay and his work on Milton and Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus,* he skilfully skirts both dangers and vindicates close, accurate reading for the pleasurable understanding and the important errors in understanding it discloses.

John McCormick and Jerry H. Bryant bring us to the customarily academic. Neither is, for what he has set out to do, long detained by works of literature themselves. McCormick's[5] sense of history and his internationalism (he is a specialist in comparative literature) supply him with a valuable overview. And his is a valiant, to-be-lauded attempt to write literary history in which both "literary" and "history" will be fully honoured, then blended to their mutual enhancing. But he is hard put to avoid the dangers inherent in criticism covering vast amounts of work in small space. He resorts to lists, summaries, abrupt judgments, facile comparisons, often dismissed on being made. (He can call Stein "a Jewish Emily Dickinson," then promptly observe that she has "only a fraction of the poet's capacity.") It is interesting, for example, to compare his contempt for Anderson with Pavese's and Cowley's more positive view. Ignoring Anderson's influence on most of the major novelists of his time, something Cowley insists on, McCormick attributes the "kindness" to him of his contemporaries and later critics largely to "the rather panhandling personality of Anderson, who begged for and in a sense enforced generosity to himself." Envious powers of enforcement! Making

[4] *A Shaping Joy*. By CLEANTH BROOKS. Methuen, £4.

[5] *American Literature: 1919-1932*. By JOHN MCCORMICK. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £2.25, paper 60p.

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Anderson out a complete poseur, McCormick ventures to contrast him, egregiously enough, with Jules Romains. We have here a richly stored, vigorous mind hemmed in, for the room it must work in, by its own furniture.

Bryant's is also an ambitious book,[6] but much more academic and limited, falling tidily under the rubric of intellectual history. In some 100 pages he tries, awesomely enough, to digest the chief scientific, psychological, sociological, and philosophical thinking of our time. This thinking he then applies to explain and to account for the modern American novel. Again most tidily, he lumps the novelists into four categories: "The War Novel," "The Business Novel," "The Hip Novel," and "Novels of Ambiguity and Affirmation." Almost inevitably he is summary and bland; his categorising, a locking-up for all its talk of openness, fails both the vitality of the thought and the immediacy, the individual reality, of the novels. Also, in academic fashion, he chooses novels which seem to illustrate the thinking he synopsised, many of which one has never heard of and should surely not hear of now, but which, having once existed, must be worth considering. The last thing to expect from such a work is literary discrimination, assessment of the novels as works of art. That would be a violation of the kind of history Bryant is writing.

EVEN MORE beside the point is Roache's *Richard Eberhart*.[7] To say the book is pedestrian is to pay it a compliment. Surely Eberhart, the Oxford University Press, and even we deserve better? It would be absurd to put the book beside the Press's Pound by Donald Davie, Frost by Reuben A. Brower or Williams by James E. Breslin. Chiefly journalism, it spends itself—at least it is consistent in its treatment—on a superficial review of Eberhart's life, career, reputation and on a summary and review —such its criticism—of the reviews of Eberhart's books as they appeared. One thing we can be grateful to the author for; so slightly does he touch the material he does not damage it for later, likelier use.

RICHARD GILMAN AND SEYMOUR KRIM, whatever their differences, belong together as manifestations of the attempt at newest criticism if not anti-criticism. Gilman,[8] a Yale University Professor after all, does preserve certain decorums. None the less, he is a "with it" critic hot on the trail of the hottest issues. He writes on white on black and black on white, on Marshall McLuhan, Susan Sontag, the most tendentious fiction, Norman Mailer (one third of the book), the Living Theatre, etc. But he tells us, "the pieces in this book are intended to make up a unity." By unity he must mean obsession. Each essay, its announced subject and Gilman's ultra-modernity notwithstanding, seems to be written to reach one insistence, a basic, old New Critical idea at that—namely, a work of art is autonomous; that work's "transformation" of the world's raw material must in no way be confused with the world.

> Thus Proust's fiction leaves homosexual love behind, Faulkner's leaves the South, Conrad's the sea, Joyce's Dublin and Hemingway's virility or honour—to reveal these scenes or subjects as pretexts. For what is being sought is a fiction, an increment to the known world and a corrective to it.

I am reminded of a professor I once had who in an ecstasy of insight announced: "Strip

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[6] *The Open Decision*. By JERRY H. BRYANT. London, Collier-Macmillan, £4.50; New York, The Free Press, $8.95.

[7] *Richard Eberhart*. By JOEL H. ROACHE. Oxford University Press, £3.90, $8.50.

[8] *The Confusion of Realms*. By RICHARD GILMAN. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £2.50.

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Shakespeare and Milton of their surface differences and they are the same."

Gilman then tells us that he still shares "faith" "in the powers of critical method, that analytic sword which the West has so actively brandished to keep us from chaos and disaster." Yet

> The old Mediterranean values—the belief in the sanctity of the individual soul, the importance of logical clarity, brotherhood, reason as arbiter, political order, community—are dead as *useful* frames of reference or pertinent guides to procedure....

One might ask whether these values are dead or simply unpractised. And how without them can he believe in the powers of critical method? What their dismissal means is that he is "willing to stand back and listen, *without comment,* to these new and self-justifying voices" of black writers. A good deal of Gilman is, therefore, rather than actual critical grappling, an "attitude" toward it or, frequently, an admission of its impossibility. Yet if art is autonomous, criticism is not; it is concerned with pointing out "art's continual establishment of new forms." Such pointing out, however, and without comment, may be all. So it is with a Susan Sontag, say, who "has marched, aggressively and with her great bristling apparatus of learning." Like the black writers and the "new consciousness" she has been talking about, she is beyond criticism. And hereon Gilman's favourite, totemistic word "new" resounds everlastingly.

But only one writer, it seems, even more than Sontag, has broken through the apparently impenetrable transformation barrier. Of course it is Mailer. Gilman takes out after Mailer's weaknesses, absurdities, and all the rest; but in the end he admits in "Mailer: Art as Life, Life as Art":

> It will not matter that they [Mailer's paintings and sculpture to be, like his novels, his movies, his architecture] will almost certainly be bad, and not matter much more if they turn out to be good. He has earned the right to do these things, and to run for mayor and ask to go to the moon, which is to say to be himself. And that is what his work has been, the being of himself, which for us has been the demonstration of how we might begin to know our own selves.

At last one of us—and for us all—has made it, achieved the triumph of self-expression far past the trivialities of what we have till now called works of art.

In Seymour Krim[9] we have a Gilman gone the whole hog. No longer troubled by art and its differences from life, Krim abandons the notion of transformation altogether; or rather he urges instant transformation. But then he is the author of that *locus classicus* for our times, his essay "The Insanity Bit"; there he assured us that only the insane or those who had been, in his phrase, to the cleaners had anything to say to the rest of us. A creature of McLuhan, the Beats, Cage and their like, he believes that we no longer need art as we have known it because society is now art and the journalist is its artist. Like Norman Podhoretz who, writing articles, some time ago proposed the article as the new art form and the supplanter of the antiquated novel, Krim wants what he does to be wanted and done. Unable, perhaps because of his long addiction to the novel, to take to the streets and the barricade of the shouted word, it is the written word as action he is after. Why with our speeded-up, fiercely incubating time, when one has the daily paper, wait for the long-gestating work of art and slow book publishers? We are moving and changing much too fast for such procrastination.

WIDE OPEN AS KRIM is to all the trade winds of the day, one might wonder why contemplation, Oriental self-abnegation, with its great present appeal, or change indeed but from within, has failed to reach him. We might suspect—and Krim would probably promptly agree—that he is too much of his world and its commercial, outrageous nature to buy any of that; on the contrary:

> We need art that screams, roars, vomits, rages, goes mad, murders, rapes, commits every bloody and obscene act that it can to express only a shred of the human emotions that lie prisoner beneath the sanitary tiles here in adman's utopia.

And speaking of a show of kindred artists, he assures us:

> These artists are too much in love with the monstrosities of contemporary life to fake their vision: the bulk of the work in this show is an appropriately brutal effort to cope with a brutish environment.

These be our seers, our prophets, our saviours.

Krim would hardly be worth considering were he not a fairly representative phenomenon, one of the increasingly common exploiters of our time's aberrations. One wonders what he and those like him would do without our confusions to justify their worst antics; offered as criticisms, they are more

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[9] *Shake It for the World.* By SEYMOUR KRIM. Allison & Busby, £2.80.

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often than not mere childishness let loose, reflections of the time's worst qualities.

The truth, however, is out when Krim admits most enviously that "the central role" is Mailer's "right" since "based on actual holdings in the world—performance, rank, notoriety, money, applause-volume, all the goodies. . . ." O to be "the rebel dramatiser of new truth" who becomes "a national—or even international—celebrity like a movie star." There are some honesties, some confessions, we are better off without. But ours is an age in which the Mailers and the Ginsbergs can become movie-star celebrities. Why then should Krim and the rest complain? When have they or their like ever had it so good?

IN IMAGINATIONS[10] we are with one of the pioneers of the new, one fortunately of major gifts. Its editor affixed this title to five works published between 1920 and 1932 in small, out of the way editions. The passionate importance of the word "imagination" to William Carlos Williams makes the title apposite enough. The work itself, revelatory of the development of one of the most—in some ways the most—seminal figures of present American poetry, must interest all those who care about poetry and its course. In the editor's Krim-like words, "He seized experience and turned it into poetry hot with the blood of life." Not free, like Pound and Eliot, to study and by temperament restless, Williams naturally turned against "literature" and sought a way counter to theirs with the bare hands and the naked mind, sought heroically to make a virtue of his necessity, out of the here and now, the local and the immense moment. Harried by his doctoring ("He saw by his own account a million and a half patients and delivered 2,000 babies.") and by his doubts and despair, he found his therapy in writing. Each night

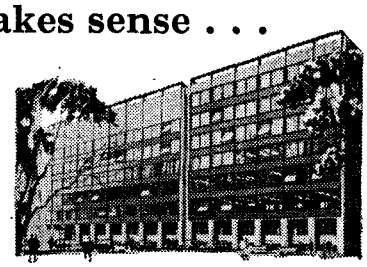
> after 11, when the last patient had been put to bed, I would always find the time to bang out 10 or 12 pages. In fact, I couldn't rest until I had freed my mind from the obsessions which had been tormenting me all day. . . .

And improvisatons though these works are, full of pages one struggles to make one's way through, they also regale us suddenly with prize insights, piercing epigrams, whole sections of marvellous delight. Most of all, they contain some of Williams' best poems. The other side of him, the gentle, loving, deeply quiet (pastoral!) poet, also emerges. In the second volume, *Spring and All,* for instance, we unexpectedly encounter, swaddled in ejaculatory prose, "By the road to the contagious hospital," one of his loveliest poems. It is a precise portrait of himself, his endless struggle, his lust for spring and the new, and at the same time the serenity, the stillness, in the very struggle, taking place near the hospital—the sturdy roadside blossoms going on whatever the traffic and turbulence around them.

We can see why it had to be this way for Williams and why it worked as well as it did. Embattled and embittered before Eliot's victory, Williams knew a deep need to justify himself and to deny others, contradictorily enough in the name of openness and all-inclusiveness. Yet such an attitude is, when enunciated into a rigid principle, regrettable and even destructive. The belief in the new and in change, put as dogmatically as Williams puts it here and his followers after him, if we agree with them, might make us wonder why we should read *this* work; some of it is now 50 years old or from a time and place certainly no longer immediately our own. Furthermore, this hunger for the new, for speed,

[10] *Imaginations.* By WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS. Edited by Webster Schott. MacGibbon & Kee, £2.75.

It makes sense . . .



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for multiplicity to the point of chaos, is admirable at its best in work like Williams'. But when dwelt on obsessionally, it is (see Krim) liable to to do little more than ape the worst aspects of the age. Crying out against America for its conventionality, its anonymity and casual brutality, are we not in danger of making a virtue of an equally American passion, that for the new, with the shallowest interpretation of progress or technology's relentless drive for change and the new as automatically an improvement? But now that Williams' work has in the minds of many Americans not only overtaken Eliot's but supplanted it, may it not be time to admire and delight in Williams still but to do differently?

Most appropriate for this context and for a comprehension of Williams is James E. Breslin's study.[11] Lucid and self-possessed. it explores the gamut of Williams' work and cuts to the core of each mode Williams practised. Breslin's reading of the poems and the prose is generally brilliant, full of sensitivity and intelligent accuracy. On occasion his good will might be deemed excessive; he becomes so enthusiastic about Williams' technique that at times he forgets its value beyond Williams' problems as a poet. So too Breslin is fairly repetitious on the basic pattern of Williams' work, his need for endless beginnings, etc. He does acknowledge the weaknesses in the later poetry: "the new looseness of manner and tenderness of feeling can sometimes sink into a sort of soggy, uplifting didacticism that had prompted Imagism in the first place." This looseness resulted no doubt from the slowing down Williams' old age and illness produced. (And many readers, relieved that at last they could make Williams out, applauded this work to the cost of the more intense, saltant earlier.) Breslin fails to indicate how flat and prosy this later work now and then becomes. But having struggled most precariously all his life, in his old age Williams could relax—no more patients, no fighting for reputation and place —into serenity, comment, even fairly old-fashioned nobility.

ANOTHER VOLUME[12] on Williams by Mike Weaver has a different intention. It would get at Williams by reproducing his environment: the documents, books, people, science, painting, photography, music, alchemy Williams was absorbed in. Weaver is, because of its patent importance to Williams, especially set on evoking the town, Rutherford, New Jersey, where Williams spent most of his life. The book gives us a vivid sense of the multiple whirlpools Williams was immersed in, vivid not least for its being tightly packed and quite disorderly in its presentation, almost Williams-like in its montage. But of course it is only a beginning. We get little of Williams' local life, his doctoring and the people involved, his domestic life or, for that matter, his dealings with other poets and writers. (Weaver may be right to accent the influence on Williams of modern painting.) Aside from Stevens, Marianne Moore, and others, is it enough to say, "I have taken for granted his debt to Ezra Pound"? Moreover, sometimes Weaver makes too easy, too glib "connections." None the less, interest accumulates even when Weaver discovers several formidable sources for Williams' "variable foot": relativity on the one hand and jazz on the other. And written though this book is out of a devotion to Williams' insistence on the local and the immediate, it helps to substantiate how much Williams, claiming to hate theory, was, like many artists around him, passionately engrossed by it.

Conrad Aiken's "Memoir" to his *The Clerk's Journal*,[13] a poem written in 1910 when he was a Harvard undergraduate, refers to similar preoccupations. Already—and the poem reflects it—Aiken and his contemporary, Eliot, were seized with a desire to find a new language:

> something less *poetic*, more inclusive, more quotidian, admitting even the vernacular, and lower in pitch: a new poetic voice, one in which one could *think*. How to do this and still manage to make it come out as poetry, this was the problem.

This fundamental contribution that Eliot, like Aiken, made to the poetry of our time Williams and his followers have generally tended to ignore. But it can be ignored no more than the vast energies, poetical, intellectual, which Eliot with Williams, Pound, and the rest banked up for our later investing in creative work and in criticism. And whatever one may conclude about the final worth of American criticism today, no one can deny its variety or, however prodigal it may become, its continuing vitality.

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[11] *William Carlos Williams*. By JAMES E. BRESLIN. Oxford University Press, £3, $6.95.

[12] *William Carlos Williams: The American Background*. By MIKE WEAVER. Cambridge University Press, £3.80, $9.50.

[13] *The Clerk's Journal*. By CONRAD AIKEN. The Eakins Press, $8.50, limited edition $30. (For some years The Eakins Press has been publishing splendid books, as lovely as they are unusual.)

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Other Books Received

Keith Alldritt. *The Visual Imagination of D. H. Lawrence.* Edward Arnold, £3

David Blamires. *David Jones: Artist and Writer.* Manchester University Press, £3

Harry Blamires. *Milton's Creation: A Guide Through Paradise Lost.* Methuen, £2.25, paper £1

Harold Bloom. *The Ringers in the Tower: Studies in Romantic Tradition.* University of Chicago Press, £5.40

James T. Boulton (ed.). *Johnson: The Critical Heritage.* Routledge, £5.50

Edward Brandabur. *A Scrupulous Meanness: A Study of Joyce's Early Work.* University of Illinois Press, $6.95

Christopher Butler and Alastair Fowler (eds.). *Topics in Criticism.* Longman, £2, paper £1

J. Donald Crowley (ed.). *Hawthorne: The Critical Heritage.* Routledge, £5

David Daiches. *Sir Walter Scott and His World.* Thames and Hudson, £1·95

Francis Doherty. *Samuel Beckett.* Hutchinson, £2·25, paper 95p

Dwight Eddins. *Yeats: The Nineteenth Century Matrix.* University of Alabama Press, $6.75

Thomas R. Edwards. *Imagination and Power.* Chatto & Windus, £3

Clark Emery. *The World of Dylan Thomas.* J. M. Dent, £3

Pamela Gradon. *Form and Style in Early English Literature.* Methuen, £5

Evelyn Barish Greenberger. *Arthur Hugh Clough.* Harvard University Press, £4·75

Elizabeth Huberman. *The Poetry of Edwin Muir.* Oxford University Press, £3.60

L. C. Knights. *Public Voices.* Chatto & Windus, £1.50

John R. Knott, Jr. *Milton's Pastoral Vision.* University of Chicago Press, £3·60

J. B. Leishman. *Milton's Minor Poems.* University of Pittsburgh Press, $6.95

David Lodge. *The Novelist at the Crossroads.* Routledge, £3

D. D. Paige (ed.). *The Selected Letters of Ezra Pound,* 1907–1941. Faber, £3·50

The Penguin Companion to Literature. David Daiches (ed.); *Britain and the Commonwealth,* £3. D. R. Dudley and D. M. Lang (eds.); *Classical, Byzantine, Oriental, African,* £2·50. Eric Mottram, Malcolm Bradbury, and Jean Franco (eds.); *U.S.A. and Latin America,* £2·50. Anthony Thorlby (ed.); *Europe,* £3·75. Allen Lane, The Penguin Press.

R. E. Pritchard. *D. H. Lawrence: Body of Darkness.* Hutchinson, £2.25, paper 90p

Jules Paul Seigel. *Thomas Carlyle: The Critical Heritage.* Routledge, £6

Thomas F. Staley & Bernard Benstock (eds.). *Approaches to Ulysses.* University of Pittsburgh Press, $7.95

C. K. Stead (ed.). *Shakespeare: Measure for Measure.* A Casebook. Macmillan, £2, paper 75p

Burton Jasper Weber. *The Construction of Paradise Lost.* Southern Illinois University Press, $12.50

The Soul of Man under Capitalism

Looks for its body among
The skyscrapers, tenement blocks
Where a white man's unwise to walk.
At the thought of revolution
Sends kites, balloons into air opaque
With excremental vapours of produce
And sees them vanish, glad
That where they've gone they'll be free.
Meanwhile it feeds refrigerators
With bags of lobster tails, whole sides of prime beef,
Homogenized milk by the gallon; and, hailed by Donuts,
By Steak or Chicken Dinner, it glides
Down Main Street emptily, starving
For the smell of newly baked bread.

Michael Hamburger

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POINTS OF THE COMPASS

"In Lyricism for Che"

The Guerrillas of Teoponte

By Alistair Horne

OF ALL THE COUNTRIES of South America, Bolivia is perhaps the strangest and most fascinating. It is certainly the most tragic. It is said that in winter in La Paz (at 12,400 feet the world's highest capital) you can get frost-bite on one side of the main street and sun-stroke on the other. Then, too, the Bolivian Andes are said to be in a constant state of movement; in technical language, they are "unstable"—which means that a road existing on Saturday may well have disappeared, disastrously, by Monday. These elements of extremes and instability are also endemic in Bolivian social and political life. Since Bolivia won her independence 145 years ago there have been, at the last count, 187 revolutions or coups; her unkind neighbours talk about "the long-playing record—33 revolutions a minute."

The simple explanation is that both history and geography have been intolerably unfair to Bolivia. No other Latin American country still suffers so much from the depredations of the *Conquistadores*. To provide forced labour for the silver and gold mines, they broke up the highly advanced agricultural system of the Altiplano Incas, and replaced it with absolutely nothing. Even with modern agricultural methods, existence on the eroded, wind-swept Altiplano (where more than half of Bolivia's population is still concentrated) seems to be a losing battle. The indigenous Indians frequently subsist at starvation level, and not so long ago the expectation of life was 32 years. Conditions in the mines, many exhausted by the Spaniards, are even worse. Silicosis is rife and the miners are probably the lowest paid in the world. The tragedy of the Bolivian tin mines (which today account for 80% of exports) is that, economically, they cannot afford to pay more. Even when the world price of tin sinks to 70 cents a pound, Bolivia's competitors in Malaya and Indonesia, with their easily-worked alluvial deposits, can still make a profit; whereas, at the current high price of $1.70 a pound, half of Bolivia's mines—where the ore has to be scraped and blasted out of the Andes at altitudes often higher than the summit of Mont Blanc—constantly run at a loss.

Here are the basic ingredients of a chronic revolutionary situation. But, whereas in some Latin American countries (such as Mexico), revolution sometimes leads to better things, it never does in Bolivia—perhaps simply because her predicament is just insoluble. In 1952, Bolivia underwent one of the most fundamental of Latin American revolutions of this century. Dr Paz Estenssoro and his *MNR* swept out the Bolivian tin barons, nationalised the mines, and parcelled out the land of the big agrarian estates among the landless serfs. But over the next ten years a combination of bad times on the tin market and inefficient management reduced production by 40%. Because of lack of working capital, productivity of the peasant small-holders slumped catastrophically. Because of the *MNR*'s pledge to increase wages when there was no money in the till, inflation soared. In 1953, the Boliviano converted at 60-to-the-dollar; within three years the free-rate reached 11,885-to-one.

By 1964, the Army had had enough and moved in, putting in power an Air Force general with great dash and *machismo*, Rene Barrientos. Under his strong-man rule, and with much U.S. aid, Bolivia began to show signs of restored equilibrium. But still the burning discontent in the mines (where, to balance the books, Barrientos cut the

THIS AUGUST *Bolivia underwent another military* coup-d'état, *and was again on the verge of civil war. With its apparently insoluble economic problems, it may yet be heading towards the "Latin American Viet Nam" that Che Guevara sought to provoke. Last year, seventy students went into the jungle in "lyrical emulation" of Che. Only a handful returned. Alistair Horne, who was recently in Bolivia, appends a commentary to their diaries, which he has also translated. Author of several books on European history, Mr Horne contributed a letter from Chile on "Commandante Pepe" to the July* ENCOUNTER.

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miners' basic wage to $20 a month) continued. Several times they erupted in revolt, and on each occasion there ensued dreadful massacres of the miners by the Bolivian Army. At the same time, mineral concessions granted to U.S. companies by pro-American Barrientos provoked mounting resentment among Bolivian nationalists.

IT WAS ON TO THIS SCENE that Che Guevara and his *Ejercito de Liberacion Nacional (ELN)* burst in 1967. Che considered Bolivia ideally suited as a starting point for the "Continental Revolution." Drawing on the triumphant experiences in Cuba, he would operate by creating guerrilla *focos* in the countryside, while eschewing the cities; he selected the wild jungle area south of Santa Cruz. This is not the place to re-explore Che's campaign, or to analyse the errors that led to the final disaster, but one may briefly summarise some of them. He had no tangible objectives, and, offending one of his own basic tenets,[1] he had no knowledge of the terrain and he was unaware just how inhospitable the Bolivian hinterland is. Mostly Cuban "foreigners", his group did not gain support from the *campesinos*[2]—nor did they get the backing of the official Communist Party, to whom Che pridefully refused to subordinate his operations. His group was out-manoeuvred, and it was finally rounded-up by Bolivian Army "Rangers" hastily trained at the U.S. counter-insurgency school in Panama. Substantively, Che's mission was a disastrous failure; but its repercussions did succeed in shaking the Barrientos régime, and—of course—Che was to become an infinitely larger-scale figure in his martyrdom than in his life.

FROM 1967 ONWARDS, the pressures on Barrientos mounted. In 1969 he was himself killed in a helicopter accident (to this day, rumours persist that he was in fact shot down by unspecified enemies). After a further period of instability, Ovando, the C-in-C of the Army during the anti-Che operations, took over. An enigmatic figure, Ovando promptly went far to the Left (motivated, some Bolivians believe, partly out of a sense of acute guilt at having given the order to execute the wounded Che). Taking a strongly anti-American line, he expropriated U.S. mining companies, and re-established relations with the Communist bloc. Throughout his brief career Ovando, however, seemed unable to keep pace with the forces to the Left of him—notably the miners' unions and the students.

In April 1970, the left-wing students of La Paz "revolted" and virtually took over the University, showing themselves to be surprisingly well-armed. They set up a "Central Committee" to dictate the operations of the University. About this time clandestine discussions began there with a view to reactivating Che's *ELN*. The ring-leader was 29-year-old Osvaldo ("Chato") Peredo, whose two brothers had both died for the cause ("Coco" at the side of Che, and "Inti" the previous year). The Peredos came of a political family from Trinidad, the capital of the Beni, the vast Amazonian jungle area comprising the northern half of Bolivia. In common with the notable majority of Latin American revolutionaries today, they were of petit-bourgeois stock. The group of seventy that Peredo collected out of the University represented many political factions; but most were affiliated not to any Marxist party but to the left-wing Christian Democrats[3] (in itself a relatively new factor also of outstanding significance in many South American countries).

The planning and administration of the Teoponte operation seems to have been considerably more haphazard even than Che's. Although there were sinister rumours of Peredo being "pushed" into it by shadowy *aparatchiks* of the La Paz extreme Left, the evidence seems to suggest that he had no central organisation

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[1] Che Guevara, *Guerrilla Warfare*. Penguin, p. 16.

[2] Some of the other difficulties faced by Che in Bolivia are suggested by Richard Gott *(Guerrilla Movements in Latin America*, 1970, p. 356) where he describes an attempt by Che's lieutenants to *concientizar* a peasant:

> "When the National Liberation Army triumphs," they said, "you will have tractors, schools and even a university." "What's a university?" asked the peasant.

[3] This faction was perhaps typified in the person of a deeply religious young medical student, Nestor Paz Zamora ("Francisco"), who later died with the Teoponte Guerrillas, and whose own campaign diary is interspersed with intimate "letters" to God. On joining the group he wrote: "I know that my decision . . . will produce a flood of accusations, from the paternalistic 'poor misguided person', to the open charge of 'demagogic criminal'. . . . [But] we cannot sit down to spend a long time reading the Gospel with cardinals, bishops, and pastors, all of whom are doing all right where they are, while the situation of the flock is one of hunger and solitude . . . . These persons, sad to say, are the Pharisees of today. . . . I think the only efficacious way of protecting the poor against their present exploitation is by taking up arms. . . ."

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behind him whatever: no lines of communication, and only the most primitive of equipment. In the words of one British diplomat, "They went into the worst country in the world with little more than ham sandwiches."

The area selected by Peredo—apparently influenced by his own origins and contacts—was Teoponte in the wild foothills of the Alto Beni, some 200 miles north of La Paz. It was an area that was urged upon Che—but rejected—for establishment of his own *foco* in 1967. From time immemorial, the Beni has been exploited by Central governments, and used as a kind of private Siberia for political exiles. Its forests are distinctly more inhospitable to man than even the *Ñancahuazú* where Nature so nearly finished off Che before the Army did. Innumerable species of incredibly poisonous snakes abound (such as the *coralito* whose victims' blood is said, literally, to turn to water and burst out through the eye-balls). There are trees exuding moisture that burns like an acid; tiny insects that get through any mosquito net and bring the body out in a mass of tropical ulcers; beetles that cause blindness if they fly into the eye; torrential rivers inhabited by piranhas; and even the indigenous Indians have a struggle to sustain life from the food the hostile forest grudgingly provides.

What motivated Peredo and his troop to enter this hell so ill-prepared? As a La Paz fellow-student who knew many of them well told me, "they went out in sheer lyricism for Che."

To the alienated youth of South America, now in an intenser state of revolutionary ferment than ever before, the continued influence of Che is not to be underestimated. He may have failed—all the way along the line—but at least, unlike the continent's traditional leaders who (at best) produce reforms that are too little and too late, or (at worst) skip off to a numbered account in Madrid when the going gets rough, Che was *consequente*. He set out for nothing less than *victoria o muerte* and when it became obvious that death would win, he never turned aside.

In many ways the Teoponte Diaries (which appeared last winter in Bolivia) seem to me more interesting than Che's. In fact the latter, were it not for the importance of Che, the martyr, would be of little value. The Teoponte Diaries give a far clearer, and more graphic, picture of the nature of the operation, the terrible problems of survival in the wilderness, and of the moral stresses and strains within the *guerrilla* itself. There is much more empathy with the human beings involved in the struggle; this particularly is a quality that, for all the talk about machine-guns and revolutionary dialectic, and allowing for the fact that the author was suffering miserably most of the time from chronic asthma, is curiously lacking in Che. But perhaps above all the Peredo Diaries demand attention because of the special relevance of their contemporary setting—a turbulent Bolivia where anything could happen, Allende in Chile, Velasco in Peru, mounting chaos in the Argentine, Tupamaros elsewhere. All this is new since Che's *débâcle* of just four years ago.

THE DIARIES BEGIN on 18 July:

> *"Saturday, 18th July.* We are a 'motorised guerrilla' in three vehicles; two trucks and a pick-up belonging to the University. At 8.30 a.m. we left La Paz towards Caranavi, as a group of 'instructors in literacy.' We kept up the subterfuge as far as Alcoche, where we stopped for five hours waiting for nightfall. We continued motorised as far as Teoponte. Three or four kilometres from the town we blocked the road, taking hostages from among the lorry drivers who suspected nothing. . . ."

At two the next morning, Peredo moved in on a U.S.-owned gold mine at Teoponte:

> "... blowing up the dredger, installations of the offices and other properties of South American Placers, expropriating the money of the company (50,000 Bolivian pesos [or about £1,778]). We took as hostages two German employees (unfortunately there were no *Yanquis*). . . ."

The guerrillas then communicated with La Paz, demanding the release of ten political prisoners in exchange for the two German engineers. The most noteworthy of these was Loyola Guzman, arrested in August 1967 as leader of Che's urban guerrilla organisation; a fanatically brave girl, she threw herself out of a third-floor window when being interrogated, so as to give warning to her associates, but survived. This first operation was Peredo's one outstanding success. The mine was put out of operation for six months and the news of this unexpected resurgence of the *ELN* shook La Paz, taking the Ovando Government completely by surprise. In the ensuing alarm, U.S. Peace Corpsmen were swiftly withdrawn from the Alto Beni area. But, as Peredo's diary goes on to note, the Bolivian Air Force was on their tracks within twenty-four hours and already the group was beginning to show the lack of discipline that was to dog it throughout.

> *"20th July.* After marching for two hours in the darkness, we realised Sebastian was lost. In the confusion and disorganisation of the march, nobody noticed his absence. Possibly he was left sleeping. . . .
>
> *"21st July.* Sebastian has not appeared; I think this is our first casualty. . . . The ants

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invaded our encampment and it was impossible to sleep.... The two *Gringo* hostages are comporting themselves well, but with much fear....

"22nd July . . . We were told by radio of the liberation of the comrades that we demanded in exchange for the German hostages.... The news has made its mark....

"23rd July. Before leaving at dawn, we liberated the prisoners.... In the afternoon, Marcos and Freddy[4] came to inform me that they were abandoning the guerrilla, on the pretext of being in poor physical state, which appears very absurd in Marcos who is robust and strong. Freddy says that he is suffering from acute gastritis. His two brothers talked to him....

"24th July. I transferred Freddy to the centre. We camped in a good place; however at six in the afternoon there was heavy bombing, but some five kilometres distant. Everybody withstood it serenely, except for Freddy. Morale is high, and organisation improves. Palm shoots *(coeurs de palmier)* abound here, and are an exquisite delicacy. We heard news of the capture of Sebastian.

"25th July. One week of this great adventure. A day of worries; Freddy disappeared, together with his brother, the fat one. . . ."

The two defectors were picked up by the group the next day.

"...That night I spoke to all the people recalling the 26th of July,[5] and the significance of our struggle. I spoke to them about the privilege which is implicit in our activity and the continuation of this war initiated by Che....

"Marcos insists on abandoning the struggle. ...Marcos and Freddy have turned themselves into human trash. Marcos wept and threw himself on the ground like a child. . . ."

Two days later, Peredo notes cheering news from La Paz. The school teachers had gone out on strike, the University was boiling over, and the Minister of Information had resigned. At the same time, Ovando was coming under increasing pressure from the right wing, headed by General Miranda. But yet another student, "Chana", disappeared "mysteriously" that day.

"I took the opportunity to let go the stragglers, who are a nuisance and diminish the mobility of the column. This was brought home to these five once again when I insisted that those who do not feel themselves capable of continuing the struggle should abandon it. They left the column, dressed in civilian clothes and without arms. Their arguments were most absurd. . . . [There follows a list of eight names; including two of the Quiroga brothers.]

"...The shake-up was necessary to purge us, and I also believe to improve our combat effectiveness. We remain 58, but in good political condition...."

On 30 July, the guerrilla made its first random contact with the Bolivian Army.

"...Anibal surprised them, but his weapon misfired twice; he saved himself miraculously, abandoning his pack...."

Later that day, Peredo ran into the Army again

"...and caused them three casualties. (At least one dead).... Rejoicing all round. We did not suffer one casualty."

There was more inaccurate bombing and machine-gunning from the Air Force. For the first time Peredo notes the problems of collecting food, complaining that "the villages are occupied by the Army." Then:

"The radio announces eight corpses belonging to us. These criminals treacherously assassinated the students.[6] It's a crime without name, worthy of Fascists. It's war to the death. This is what the enemy imposes upon us. The most painful thing is to know of the death of people who gave themselves, and who could have employed their energies with greater usefulness. Despite their defection it does not cease to cause pain. I am concerned about Napo[7] who has two brothers among the students; but his reaction apparently is satisfactory, and each day he emerges more as an efficient combatant and of great human quality. The group has toughened itself and displays better moral conditions. No one doubts any longer the felony of Ovando and his Government when they promised guarantees to those who abandoned the guerrilla. We move very little. The Air Force, as is its wont, continues its nasty tricks. Today they dropped napalm....

"4th August.... Food continues to be the main concern. We laid hands on the last fragment of dried beef. The radio announces that 'Operation Fan' has begun, the rumour being to allow us to escape towards Peru. Ovando does not want any 'shedding of blood.' Nothing is said about the napalm, or the daily bombings. He does not want to disclose the identity of the eight corpses. There is preparation of a *coup d'état* by Rogelio Miranda. . . .

"8th August. Rain lashes down all night. . . . Rogelio and Chuma were sick. The radio reports the capture of Raul Sendic[8] in Uruguay. If it is correct, the news is a hard blow to the Latin American Liberation Movement.... Today we killed a small monkey.

[4] Their guerrilla pseudonyms. "Freddy", alias Eduardo Quiroga Bonadona, was the son of a prominent retired general.

[5] The day in 1953 when Fidel Castro attacked the Moncada Barracks, which marks the beginning of the Cuban Revolution.

[6] The eight who defected on 29 July. This was an episode that was to have widest repercussions, still resounding today.

[7] Presumably the third Quiroga brother.

[8] The Tupamaro leader. That week Peredo had a letter published in the Montevideo press, thanking the Tupamaros for their support, but declaring that the Bolivian *ELN* still favoured rural guerrilla activity over the urban operations of the Tupamaros.

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"*9th August.* . . . There is *Surazo*[9] and much humidity. The loss of tins of milk and sardines is becoming chronic. What is most probable is that there are no such losses, but that the people themselves are eating them, which says much about the lack of indoctrination. . . ."

On the twelfth, the guerrillas found an isolated village not occupied by troops. Here they rested, replenishing their food supplies and propagandising the peasants, who were "at first suspicious." It then broadcast "Communiqué No. 1", revealing the "crime" committed against the eight defectors, and declaring its political aims: "Formation of a government of workers and peasants which will assure the development of a socialist revolution within the country; dissolution of the Army and the formation of militias which will guarantee popular power; nationalisation of all foreign businesses which exploit the riches of our people. . . ."

On leaving the village, the guerrilla rearguard was caught by accurate strafing.

"There is no doubt that we are pinpointed. It could have been a *campesino* who took out the communiqué. . . . Alfonso abandoned the march, and headed for the interior of the forest. Already one was beginning to note something funny about him, and he is not going to be the last. . . . They found his pack without food. In his haste he left his mess tin and blanket. . . .

"*16th August.* Four weeks of life in the wilds. . . . Majority of the people are now more or less acclimatised. There are a few who tend towards demoralisation and do not see the perspectives of our struggle. . . .

"*18th August.* We have had three collisions with the army with three casualties for them and one unconfirmed in the ambush of yesterday. On our side, we have ten casualties, but none in combat with the enemy. . . .

"*19th August.* . . . We killed a '*Vibora Pucarara*'[10] and ate it tonight. . . ."

OVER THE NEXT DAYS, Peredo notes more "encouraging" news from La Paz. The students in the University were pressing the Government to reveal the identity of the dead *guerrilleros,* while General Quiroga was demanding the corpses of his sons—"and expressing solidarity with us. The affair is heating up in our favour." His position already shaky, Ovando was now thoroughly put on the spot by the Army's apparently unnecessary act of brutality. He temporised, declaring that —"for security reasons"—the bodies could not be handed over for 90 days; by which time they would have decomposed to the point where it would be impossible to ascertain the manner of death.[11] Ovando's evasiveness only added fuel to the flames, and passions continued to mount in La Paz.

"*23rd August.* We arrived at Mapiri. We decided to sacrifice the mule because it delays the march very much. . . .

"*25th August.* As foreseen, the column goes on diminishing. Today the 'break-away' is Juanito. . . .

"*27th August.* Felipe can no longer march. He has a broken bone in his heel. The march is extremely slow, because he has to be carried in a hammock at night in order to cross the open clearings. There is no doubt that the army has detected us, through the *campesinos.* . . ."

The next day, while trying to find a hiding place in a settlement in which to leave Felipe, Peredo's detachment was overtaken and nearly surrounded by an army patrol. A disastrous shoot-up ensued.

". . . I organised a defence with the few people who were there . . . some 20 soldiers were shooting towards the banana plantation. The weapons of Perucho and Chuma which were at my side did not function. I shot off one solitary round, and don't know if I hit the target, because at that moment they opened fire on us with a 30-calibre. There was much confusion among us and many were throwing away their packs. While we headed into the forest, Casiano (Benjo Cruz)[12] was wounded in the arm and right foot. . . . A day of defeat.

"Sergio possibly fell into the stream with the first shots. Pablito, Gregorio, and Cesar fell in the farm-yard. . . . It makes a total of 11 casualties in a fight, the initiative of which was completely the enemy's. . . . We remain 45 men with the bitter taste of defeat. Now we are experiencing in our own flesh that which we had repeated so often in order to prepare ourselves psychologically. War is cruel and hard and our sentimentality resists accepting that cruelty. Here was a factor in our sluggishness; not to have taken a decision over Felipe earlier, and allowing the moment of leaving him to fill with dramatics, we gave the enemy time to catch us still peacefully on the farm. . . ."

Recalling one of the more disastrous days in Che's campaign, Peredo concluded:

"All war is spattered with moments such as these and for that reason it is strange to write

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[9] A bitter cold wind blowing from Patagonia, that can cause an unpleasantly abrupt temperature drop in the Bolivian tropical jungle.

[10] An extremely poisonous snake.

[11] They have still not been handed over to this date.

[12] A well-known young Bolivian poet, renowned particularly for his fiery invective against the Church and the mining *patrones* in a poem called "*La Preguntita*" ("The Little Question"), typified by the line; "There is one thing in life that is more important than God; and that is that no one should spit blood in order that someone else should live better. . . ." He died later.

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the same as the most experienced and capable fighters wrote before us. . . ."

On 1 September (Tuesday), the guerrillas were again surprised by the Army—this time inside a river canyon, and they were split into two groups as one section took flight across the river.

"*3rd September.* The sense of defeat among the people is very marked, and becomes more acute with the defection this morning of the three *macheteros* [Machete men] who used to form the head of the vanguard (they took a radio with them). We have only two bad machetes, and the forest is the worst possible and thick with *Chumizales* [a kind of thick elephant grass] . . . ."

THE MIXTURE of good and bad news continues.

"*6th September.* Today the final results were given of the Chilean elections. Allende's victory is a great stimulant for our revolution and we toast this triumph. . . . Carlos and Mongol deserted.[13] The symptoms were evident. . . .

"*9th September.* First anniversary of the death of Inti.[14] The whole day absorbed in memories of him, thinking of the loss which he represented to us, and the problems that would have been avoided if I had been him. I have never felt more of an orphan than this day. . . .

"*11th September.* . . . Gaston and David counted 100 Ranger soldiers in the direction of Mapiri, who were certainly going to reinforce the troops now in all the settlements on the way. We were 20 men. . . . I spoke to them of the peril which was closing in on us, and that the only prospect of breaking the circle was by moving as much as possible by night. . . . I insisted that those who did not want to go on should abandon the struggle, but all are disposed to continue. . . . "

Nevertheless, a further three deserted that night. At dawn, Peredo realised that his diminishing group had encamped very close to a clearing occupied by the Army.

"*12th September.* The whole day we were a few yards from the troops, without either moving or making any noise, stuck in a small forest bordering the road. We heard their voices and saw them passing without paying any attention. They were not aware of our presence. . . . Yesterday's ration was one quarter of a teaspoon of lard with salt. . . ."

STARVATION WAS APPROACHING and the army appeared to be rapidly tightening its net. On the 13th there was another collision with Army Rangers, and Peredo came close to being cornered—like Che—inside a small canyon. There were three casualties on each side, and another of Peredo's men (Kolla) "fled into the forest at the first shooting." He, too, was reportedly later "liquidated" by the Army. Peredo now had only 13 men with him, cut off from the other remnants of the guerrilla, partially lost and increasingly demoralised.

"The army is showing itself to be aggressive and for the first time entered the forest in pursuit of us. . . .

"*26th September.* Until today the situation has been desperate on account of hunger. We fed ourselves on palm shoots, fungus, and a fruit resembling an acorn which was eked out among all of us. . . . At 2 p.m. Forte and Perucho turned up. They had deserted from the camp out of hunger, taking with them two tins of sardines from my pack (the strategic reserve for the 14 survivors), money, and a small amount of lard which remained to me in my plastic bag. They were executed on the spot, despite the enormous esteem which bound me to Perucho. . . .[15] Today is the third anniversary of the death of Coco.[16] September seems to be a fatal month.

"*27th September.* We reconnoitre very little in the area. Debility does not permit us to move much. We split up in pursuit of game, but without luck.

"*28th September.* The days are slow and offer little."

AT THIS POINT, Peredo's own diary comes to an end. He later added the following lines, subsequent to his capture by the Army:

"After September 28th, we resumed the march in search of a *chaco*[17] in order to solve the problem of food. We move with much difficulty on account of our advanced state of inanition. We are Mamerto, Cristián, David, and myself. After two or three days of this exhausting progress and without coming upon any *chaco*, Mamerto remained where he lay, dead of inanition. The three of us continue, with few hopes, and with an immense pain at such an absurd loss of this comrade who kept on growing both spiritually and as a human being thoughout the course of the war. . . ."

In the course of the following week, the starving trio had another miraculous escape

[13] They too were apparently picked up and executed by the Army, together with two other defectors.

[14] Brother of "Chato", who was trapped in a La Paz house and shot by the police.

[15] This appears to be the first, and only, mention of any disciplinary "executions" carried out by the guerrillas themselves. It was a measure of the desperation of their plight.

[16] The oldest Peredo brother, killed with Che in 1967.

[17] A cultivated clearing in the forest.

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from the Army, during which Cristián was slightly wounded. At last they spotted a village ahead of them

> "... that afternoon we camped on a rise of ground where we made, or more accurately where we dreamed, plans of what we could do when we arrived at the village. These were the last dreams of Cristián who that night sank into the definitive and eternal dream. Once again hunger (that invisible enemy) robbed us of another comrade. . . ."

On gaining the village and being fed, Peredo says: "Our stomach upheavals were indescribable." They then "made contact with the miners and *campesinos* of Tipuani who organised themselves into relief groups, to contact and take food to the comrades who remained behind under command of Omar".[18] On 13 October, "Chato" and "David" were captured in Tipuani by the Rangers, apparently tipped off by a *campesino*.

In the meantime, much had happened in the outside world. Opposition to Ovando from the labour unions, students, and the Church had reached a crescendo. Six people were killed in riots that broke out in most of the principal Bolivian cities, and a climax came when one Canadian and three Spanish priests were expelled after they had started a hunger strike in support of the students' demands for the return of the guerrilla corpses. The Government declared hunger strikes to be a crime: "subject to the same penalties as attempted suicide." On 9 October, General Miranda launched a Right-wing revolt against Ovando. The Army seemed split, and Bolivia teetered on the brink of civil war; the U.S. State Department declared the situation "the most dangerous in South America." Miranda and Ovando agreed a temporary truce, and then the Left-wing students ran amok—revealing themselves to be better armed than ever before. A professor of medicine was machine-gunned leaving a hospital; police stations were overrun; the two leading newspapers of La Paz were taken over (*El Diario* has still not been restored to its owners); U.S. Embassy offices throughout the country were sacked. Finally, after World-War-II Mustangs of the Bolivian Air Force had dropped a few dummy bombs on the Presidential Palace, Ovando was deposed in favour of another general, 49-year-old J. J. Torres. He was of poor parentage, and was largely Indian (an unusual thing for a Bolivian President to be, in a country which has the biggest Indian proportion of any Latin American country). He was also pronouncedly left-wing—having been sacked as C-in-C by Ovando for over-praising Castro. Miranda took refuge in the Paraguayan Embassy, and Ovando—following the other conventional path open to unseated Bolivian rulers—was sent to be Ambassador to Spain. Torres then promptly set about organising an amnesty commission to bring the surviving *ELN* guerrillas out of the jungle.

From the Alto Beni, "Omar" continues the story at the point where he and "Chato" lost contact;

> *"23rd September.* . . . Alberto fainted in the afternoon. The symptoms of debility are increasingly evident. Slow and hesitating steps, sickness, clouding of vision, infection of wounds, etc. . . .
>
> *"24th September.* . . . I tried to shoot a toucan, but missed. . . . Without food for eight days; palm shoots and fungus are finished. . . .
>
> *"26th September.* Still nobody arrives. It's strange. . . .[19]
>
> *"27th September.* I was thinking of my daughter with nostalgia, about the sons of America who will have to defer their hopes of happiness if we definitively lose this battle. The lard-soup did not agree with me. If nobody arrives tomorrow, we shall go down in any event. . . ."

Somehow the group keeps going. Then, on 12 October (the day before the capture of "Chato") "Omar" hears voices which he presumes to belong to the Army. In despair, he prepares to fight it out.

> ". . . Perhaps this will end tomorrow; nevertheless our ideas will always live, and those who take part in the struggle are proud of having given everything for the revolution.
>
> *"15th October.* Salvation! The voices of yesterday belonged to four people who followed us to give help. . . ."

The relief party brought remarkable news—"In 40 days we shall taste rice and sweet coffee. The radio has said that Torres will arrange an amnesty. I don't believe it. . . ."

> *"19th October.* . . . Quirito shot himself accidentally in the mouth with a Mauser, smashing his jaw bone, while trying to shoot a small bird. . . .
>
> *"20th October.* Our situation is chaotic. The Army is moving round us. We are alone in a forest which we don't know well. Food is growing scarce. . . .

[18] Alias Gustavo Ruiz Paz, Havana trained, in charge of a group that became separated from the main column.

[19] "Omar's" group was then waiting for help sent by "Chato" from Tipuani.

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> "*30th October.* While having breakfast the scout of the Amnesty Commission took us by surprise. On behalf of the President they are offering to respect the life of each one, hospitalisation in the military hospital, and safe conduct. The miners don't trust anyone, and suggest we continue on to Chima, where we would be safe. From a place where our security is guaranteed, we could negotiate. . . ."

At the poor mining village of Chima, "Omar" and the survivors of the Teoponte Guerrilla, now reduced to a handful, were taken under the wing of Torres' Amnesty Commission.

> "*2nd November.* . . . Throughout the day we received an innumerable number of people who express to us their admiration and solicitude. All arrive with presents which range from caramels to beer, including exquisite dishes, special bread made with the motif of 'All Saints', fruit—and some made presents to us of grains of pure gold. It's impossible to find words to thank our people, for whom we threw ourselves into the struggle, for so much affection and receptiveness. . . ."

According to "Omar", such moving signs of "solidarity" continued until the moment of their departure. That day there was a last sharp dispute when the Army proposed putting all the guerrillas in one plane and the Commission in another. Distrustful, "Omar" refused. The Army climbed down. In the aeroplane, the student-guerrillas found themselves accompanied by none less than the Rector of their University.

On arrival in La Paz: "A cloud of journalists pursued us. In the middle of all the agitation, I saw the mother of Quiroga Bonadona. A strong and valiant woman. There were other friends. In the aeroplane I met my brother, comrade, and chief—'Chato'. In a strong embrace we expressed our anguish and pain at having lost the battle started three months ago. Nevertheless, we have an infinite faith that, in the end, our ideas will triumph and the days of sacrifice we have lived will be of no importance if the recompense is the longed-for happiness of the people."

On 16 November, "Chato" and "Omar" together with six other survivors were flown into exile in Dr Allende's Chile. They have, reportedly, now gone on to Cuba. Thus ended the Teoponte "war."

FROM THEN ON, the position of Torres' weak left-wing Government became daily feebler. He allowed a "People's Assembly", composed of various elements of the far Left, simply to move in to the untenanted Congress building next to the President's Palace, whence it began to operate as an alternative government. Next, the powerful trade-union federation (the COB) took up the refrain of demanding that the Army hand over the remains of the slaughtered students. Eventually right-wing Army factions could bear Torres' vacillations no longer, and in August there was a new *golpe* instigated by Colonel Banzer, the former chief of the Military Academy who had led an abortive coup against Torres in January.

For several days savage fighting took place in La Paz, with miners and students attacking the Army headquarters with home-made dynamite bombs, in which over 120 deaths were reported. The last centre of left-wing resistance was inside the University. For the third time in a year, elderly Mustangs (maintained by the Bolivian Air Force for just such an emergency) were brought into action. This time, instead of firing into the air and dropping dummy bombs, they apparently blasted the University façade with rocket and machine-gun fire, and a dozen students were killed before the fighting was over.

Torres fled to Peru, and now a right-wing military junta reigns uneasily in La Paz instead. The Left appears crushed. But, as General Reque Terán, the Army C-in-C, told me while I was in Bolivia, the *ELN* guerrillas are, as a result of the smashing of the Teoponte student group, "stopped but not terminated." Their protagonists point out that Bolivar was thrown out of South America five times, before returning to final triumph. "There will always be other Peredos. . . ."

Meanwhile the basic economic facts of life remain grimly unaltered, and perhaps unalterable. The latest coup has only sharpened the divisions between the impoverished miners and the students of the Altiplano, and the conservative, relatively prosperous inhabitants of the Eastern lowlands and their Army supporters. The prospect of the Latin American "Viet Nam" that Che so ardently sought is still by no means only a chimaera.

Sixty years ago, an eminent British traveller, Lord Bryce, remarked that time "was almost the only thing of which there is more than enough in Bolivia." That too may now be running short.

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AUTHORS & CRITICS

Genetics & Society

A Scientist Replies

By C. D. Darlington

WHILE writing my book on *The Evolution of Man and Society*, I recalled the irritation and indeed the anger of scientific critics at my earlier work: I had broken the rules. The new book I expected would break even more rules and irritate even more critics. In this I was mistaken. Most of the reviewers seemed to like the book; a few admitted to being baffled or disgusted; in between opinions were divided.

Disagreement began with style. To the poet, Geoffrey Grigson, the book was easy to read; but to the critic, Cyril Connolly, it proved unreadable. To the *Irish Times* it was difficult but honest while to the *Glasgow Herald* (Naomi Mitchison) it was propaganda disguised as science. To the *Guardian* it was deliberately provocative; to the *Sunday Times* it was tame. To Dr. Alex Comfort it was rashly Panglossian; to Professor Max Beloff, reasonably pessimistic. As regards politics our progressives were divided: to the liberal-left *New Statesman* the book was reactionary and insidious; but to the Communist *Morning Star* it was revolutionary and often correct. As regards science, some reviewers were prepared to take my word for it as a sort of expert myself but others sought the help of their friends. The *Times* referred kindly to my earlier work; the *Listener* asked why I had done no earlier work. As regards sociology there were four opinions. Lord Simey welcomed the book as a basis for discussion. But *New Society* was unable to see any point in discussing it: the reviewer was flummoxed and frightened. In the *New York Times Book Review*, Mr Robert Nisbet begged me to be charitable to social scientists. Were not the terrible atomic men preparing to grind us all up together in to the second law of thermodynamics? The *Christchurch Press* of New Zealand raised an even graver issue: in genetic selection could there be any morality?

In one direction the comments awakened distant memories. "Poison for students" was the description given to my biology when I was young. "Dangerous for the young" is the way Professor Beloff now more politely puts it [ENCOUNTER, October 1970]. But, as I shall try to show, when beliefs are disturbed it is the teacher not the pupil who is in danger.

Others were less direct, and they cast doubts on those parts of the book that were beyond them. One biochemist (in *Science Journal*), claimed to know me and sketched the stages he had observed in my mental decline. He then quoted the opinions of geneticists who, he alleged, would have contradicted my views if they had had the chance to read them. I hope these authorities will speak for themselves in due course. The representative of the *New Statesman* took a more radical step. He called in a psychiatrist to examine not the book but me, and this expert quickly explained the case. The situation, he said, was well known in his profession. The book was the product of the senile delusions to be expected in a man exhausted by long years of devotion to microscopy.

Perhaps I can best resolve some of these differences of opinion if I explain how I came to write what I did.

THE IDEA BEHIND the book is not new nor is it my own. It is a very old one. I came to it through reading T. H. Morgan on genetics and chromosomes in 1922. The next year I went to work with William Bateson who was responsible for the term *genetics* but didn't believe in chromosomes—or in Morgan. These two men had one character in common: they were both concerned with far-reaching issues. They were both willing to assume a total connectedness, a causal and historical connectedness, of everything in life. Indeed that is what Bateson meant by genetics and what Morgan meant by chromosomes. Within these terms they included everything to do with man. Ideas of this kind sprang from Charles Darwin and before him from Erasmus Darwin, and the name of genetics had merely pulled the ideas together and given them a punch. The punch did not make them any more acceptable in our universities, and for the next twenty years they continued to be shut out by our educational establishment. Which is what still makes genetics surprising and difficult for many otherwise educated critics today.

Under Bateson I was able to pursue the study of genetics with the help of plant-breeding and the microscope, and by 1932 I had made enough progress to give my own view of the connectedness of life. The title I gave it

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in a final chapter of a book was the *Evolution of Genetic Systems*, and it represented the central idea I have been developing since that time. The chapter became itself a book which appeared in several editions, and it was summarised by Julian Huxley in a general account he gave of evolution in 1942. In Huxley's book a difficulty however appeared. I was thinking, not of organisms, but of chromosomes as what mattered in evolution; as the materials giving their connectedness to the products of evolution, to the societies and communities of living things, and to the whole world in which they live. I was thinking of evolution not as a 19th-century family tree but rather as the mode of behaviour of a 20th-century network of protein and DNA. It was too much to expect good zoologists and botanists to turn their traditional ideas upside down in this way. For at that time very few of them had seen the chromosomes. And fewer still had heard of DNA. They were then where the social and medical scientists are today.

A second difficulty was that I wanted to go much further. I wanted to apply the notion of a genetic system to human society. But I had already noticed that all studies of human society existed in pigeon-holes and the occupants of each pigeon-hole neither knew nor greatly cared what was happening in the others. The sociologists, anthropologists, and psychologists, the linguists, economists, and historians, were all scratching away merrily on their own. Connections and connectedness were far from their thoughts. They each had their own independent theology. That had not been so a hundred years earlier and, I hope, will not be so a hundred years hence. But it has, alas, been so from 1930 to 1970.

The notion of connectedness of course was still there—under the counter. Although they did not wish to be reminded of him, they had all heard of Darwin. But with the political events of 1933, there were certain new reasons for forgetting him. He had spoken of races, human races. "*Race*", they said—who has ever heard of such a thing! "Species", we believe in. "Ethnic groups" (Huxley's invention) we will allow. "Cultures", we admit and admire. But *races*, never! And so far as Classes and Heredity are concerned, isn't "Background" good enough? Why commit oneself to an unpopular opinion?

So it has remained ever since. In Moscow, genetics was suppressed by dictation; but the same end was reached. Subject races and the scientists who understood their meaning were exterminated together. By 1945 this struggle, as well as the other one, was finished all over the world. The result was everywhere the same: a unanimity such as no Inquisition had ever established.

It was in this atmosphere that I published an essay in *Nature* in 1943 under the title "Race, Class, and Mating in the Evolution of Man." The title would fit my latest book. But, apart from the idea of a chromosome pool, it was as remote from the academic understanding or propriety of that time as were my ideas of an evolution of genetic systems on which it was based.

In this essay I tried to sketch the gaps that had to be filled, the corners that had to be turned, before a model of human evolution and history could be constructed. During the following twenty years I was able to collect the evidence I needed for those genetic causes and genetic effects, the reciprocal interactions, connected with language, morals, religion, incest, assortative mating, hybridisation, fertility and sterility, invention and migration. Each one of these essays separately must have struck my scientific colleagues as ingenious enough. But, also, by their standards, a little frivolous. What could be the use, the relevance of these disconnected and now unfashionable speculations?

MY OPINIONS were disconnected, above all, from any information about the genes concerned. Now "genes" had long been the propulsive idea or key word behind genetic research, the kind of work that people do all over the world for a Ph.D. degree. Why? Because the integral approach was in process of being blocked by competition with the startling success of analytical methods—to which I shall return later. Nothing on my lines could therefore lead to academic employment. It was in that sense "poison for students." I was not myself in need of employment: but I did need publication and this now became almost impossible. In 1948, in a lecture on *The Conflict of Science and Society*, I described the position which had led me with the late Ronald Fisher to found a new journal, *Heredity*. There I had a forum in which I was able to publish my views on chromosomes, on genetics, and on society.

While this was happening a more prosaic problem was unknotted. Theories of the beginning of agriculture which we owed to a Russian pupil of Bateson, Vavilov, had to be recast in the light of new discoveries in both genetics and archaeology. With the help of carbon-dating, in the course of ten years, the chronology of pre-history (hitherto conjectural and contradictory) could be put on to a single

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connected scale. The origin of civilisation for the first time came into historical focus.

Equipped with these new tools I found the job of interpreting history in terms of biology at last technically approachable. But there was yet another difficulty in the way of bringing society, as it were, face to face with itself. It was that the ordinary ideas of biology were not adequate for dealing with the complexities of the social situation. How was I to explain the paradox that my own ideas of genetic systems, which were derived from biology but seemed unnecessary for biologists, were the natural and only means for the study of society? Clearly the issue had to be faced in several stages.

I CAN TRY here only to put these stages in order. As man has changed his environment and brought it under control he has acquired a choice of environments of a range unknown to any other organism. He has also through technical invention and through religion acquired a choice of breeding systems. What had therefore been separate factors in the evolution of lower organisms were bound to become, with the advance of civilisation, for the first time interlocked.

These theoretical relations lie outside our practical experience of plants and animals, and biologists were not interested in them. They seemed highfalutin. I, therefore, tried to bring them to the notice of a wider public by writing a book which I thought educated men would understand and philosophers might enjoy. I called it *The Facts of Life*, and in it I described the steps by which man had come to understand heredity and evolution and, hence, his own character and being. I then explained the contrasted roles of determinism in the lives of individuals and uncertainty in the processes of evolution. I went on to discuss the bogus biology of the social scientists, of the medical profession and of various popular figures, East and West, such as T. D. Lysenko and Arnold Toynbee. And I concluded with a genetic study of workaday problems in human society, such as those of sex, marriage, crime, fertility, and population. The book was translated into several languages and when the title was changed to *Genetics and Man* it could even be published in America. But academically it was again without effect and as a preparation for the present book it was a failure. Only a fraction of the present reviewers had seen it and for most of them it was outside the visible spectrum of knowledge. When people are told that brothers have the same ancestry but a different heredity they feel that the subject is in a superficial sense too easy or in a profound sense too difficult. The comments on the present book of "potted history" from one wit, and "Plato to Nato" from another, reflect this failure to understand.

There were however more serious opinions among the reviewers. They were cultural, genetical, historical and emotional, and it is under these separate heads that I want now to consider them.

MANY CRITICS were puzzled or shocked by my views on the creation of culture. Naturally so, for they have been told quite a different story. The social scientist, Communist or Capitalist, Christian or Atheist, or merely liberal, has at the present time a single prevailing dogma so unquestionable that he never needs to state it. But I will state it. He holds that the behaviour and beliefs of all human communities are specified, determined, and transmitted by what is called their culture. This culture is the product of "psycho-social evolution"—again Huxley's phrase, I am sorry to say. It is not dependent on any racial, hereditary, or genetic character of the people concerned. To suggest such a thing would provoke intolerance and even "racism." On the contrary, all people are genetically equal in their capacity for culture. All men can learn all things—if they have the chance. They are equally good, kind, and clever by nature. They differ only in respect of their various cultures which, having floated in the air, have descended upon mankind in its mentally and spiritually homogeneous ethnic groups. They have done so in such circumstances as we may later discover but need not now ask. Meanwhile we have to believe that the biological processes of heredity, variation, and evolution had long been arrested so that the diverse cultures of today could evolve by their own psycho-social processes. These it is our business (or perhaps the business of UNESCO) to mix up or rub down into the homogeneous matrix of a new and perfect world order.

Now I have dared to ask the question that the social scientist has failed to ask, namely, *how these different cultures came into being.* A phrase is not an answer. What we need is evidence.

There are, in my opinion, several kinds of evidence. Some of these I introduce explicitly or implicitly at different stages in my narrative. Others arise from the social studies analysed and criticised in my *Genetics and*

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Man. Others again arise from the work of a line of educational psychologists in measuring intelligence and its inheritance. They begin with Galton's *Hereditary Genius.* They proceed through Terman and Burt and today are well represented by Arthur Jensen (*e.g.* in the *Harvard Educational Review* of 1969), and in H. J. Eysenck's recent book on the I.Q. argument. They have depended on the use of the method of correlation between parents and offspring which (if I may remind the *Listener*) was invented by Galton in 1888 as a means of showing causation in heredity.

These kinds of evidence agree with what scientists have learnt in the course of research and teaching about the two processes of the creation and transmission of culture. Our experience has been both historical and personal. It has shown, first, that some individuals in any community can make an invention or discovery, and others cannot. It has shown, secondly, that some individuals can learn to copy, or imitate, or repeat what has been invented, and others cannot. And it has shown, thirdly, that there is a difference between these two classes which is innate and unalterable, the reason being that the capacity to think differs with the structure of the brain at birth. It is a difference in which there is a large genetic component subject to heredity and to recombination. It is also a component in which all individuals and all breeding groups, all classes and all races differ. Finally, these observations are embodied in the practices of education, the conduct of research, and the methods of employment, of all the more developed civilisations and peoples today. It is also embodied in the much despised proverbial wisdom accumulated over the last hundred generations by ordinary but observant men.

CULTURE THEN, FOR ME, has been created by particular individuals and it is preserved, or lost, by particular lines of their successors. When two different peoples meet, therefore, I expect the fate of their cultures to depend on the presence, or absence, or extent, of mating and recombination between the whole peoples or particular classes of them. In my book, therefore, I have tried to follow these processes in hundreds of cases where the evidence allowed me. That is why I have taken so much care with Royal Dynasties, with the history of science and with the Industrial Revolution.

Among these situations there is one grand experiment. It is provided by the contrast between the mixture of races and cultures in Europe and India. Each time great migrations and conquests have swept over Europe they have been followed by mixing. This hybridisation has always been racially and socially discriminating. But it has been deep and rapid enough to create some new things as well as to destroy some old things so that the gross complexity and diversity of culture have ultimately increased. In India, on the other hand, migrations and conquests, owing to the colour bar or *apartheid* enforced by Brahminical rules, have been followed by the minimum of hybridisation. The Brahmins have indeed managed to conquer and govern India without war or hybridisation. By basing religion on caste and caste on colour they have divided India. But they have also, of course, united it; they have preserved their race and its dominance; they have also preserved their culture, indeed all culture, a preservation which has meant stagnation. Mr Gladstone (quoted by Professor Beloff) is not the only educated Englishman who has failed to notice the lessons to be derived from this genetic contrast between Europe and India.

FROM CULTURE let me pass to the more general problem of the environment. In my argument, to the annoyance of some critics and the perplexity of Professor F. A. Hayek, I refer to the increasing predominance of genetic over environmental variables in the evolution of man. To be sure, I argue that environmental differences in climate and disease between Europe and Africa have governed their history. But I go on to show that they have done so only by virtue of the selective movement and survival of different tribes and races. It is only when we have seen in this way how heredity works and what it does that we can go on to define the part played by the environment. I have, therefore, attempted to specify in more detail than ever before the influences on men of climate, soil and disease, and of plant and animal life. By doing so I have been able to convince myself that these influences, both massive and minute, are invariably reciprocal. So clear is this reciprocity that I have seemed to turn the historic argument of eugenics upside down. For in my view, if man is not to be ruined, his environment must first be protected from him. Ecologists and conservationists saw this point: the *Eugenics Society Bulletin* missed it.

These interactions are complex enough to introduce a number of paradoxes. Most of them are more difficult for the scholar and the philosopher than they are for the practical man. When I say that one man's invention makes another man's environment, it seems

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sophistry to the scholar but to the practical man it seems common sense. On the other hand, when I say that sexual relations are a continuation of social relations and that people who work together therefore breed together and form social classes adapted to work together, it is again obvious to the layman. But to the scholar I seem to be simplifying unbearably what should be wrapped up in the accepted and recondite terms of sociology. Nor is the geneticist free from blame; but he needs to be separately examined.

SOME OF MY CRITICS—the less informed—lament that I claim too much for genetics. Not even Professor Hayek [ENCOUNTER February] understands what I am doing with this discipline. Genetics can already be seen as the theoretical framework, the causal framework, of biology. It is certainly the only framework we have. For our knowledge of living things and our experience assure us that it is going to fit together better and better; but that does not mean that it entirely fits together now. Or that it ever will do so. To answer every question that genetics raises would leave no time to profit by the results. But before looking at the end, look at how it began.

Genetics began with two kinds of approach made by two men, Mendel and Galton, born in the same year (1822). Their methods, apart from being mathematical, were deeply contrasted. They gave rise in effect to two separate sciences. Mendel was concerned with picking out and comparing the action of heredity in different individuals when he crossed in-bred lines of peas. Galton was concerned with measuring and comparing the action of heredity and environment as they appeared in different individuals among out-bred populations of men and women. Both methods relied on differences. But the one was analytical, the other integral. The analytical method has led to a more exact understanding of the ultimate determinants of heredity. Notably in bacteria and viruses, it has reached down to the genetic code. It has at the same time shown that in an organism like man heredity can never be fully reduced to analytical terms.

In man we can examine heredity as a whole. We can also look at little bits of it in separate operations. But there is no end to these operations. Each chromosome consists of an exact linear order of millions of units necessary for the working of the whole. The study of the chromosomes is itself devoted to a range of operations from the analytical to the integral and from the chemical and physiological to the evolutionary. And still it shows the unbridgeable gaps between diverse inferences. For example, the differences between the two sexes, man and woman, is one of the most fundamental facts of life, physiologically, and socially, intellectually, and historically. It is a totally genetic one incapable of being effectively modified by the environment. Light and darkness, teaching and feeding, do nothing to change it. It depends upon a piece of chromosome having a certain genetic structure. In a thousand years we may know analytically in some cases what that structure is. More likely not. And it certainly won't be expressed as "genes." But in the intervening period we shall continue to use genetic assumptions in studying sexual problems.

What, then, is the position of genetics in human studies? On the one hand, we have the most beautiful and also significant analytical studies, for example, of blood groups or blood pigments. On the other hand, we have the study of such properties as sex, class, and race, intelligence, fertility, and survival, properties apparently beyond analysis but undoubtedly underlying the growth of civilisation. The first kind of study can often be recorded in a neat and cogent paragraph; the second may require a succession of volumes to explain it. The first may be advanced as a proof. The second will appear as an argument. But we must not for this reason imagine that the short answer is true and the long one false. Each is indispensable to the other, and both are indispensable to us.

AT THIS POINT I should say a word about the question of proof. Many critics, not only Dr Hayek, tell me I cannot *prove* my contentions to be true. The more naïve charge me (rightly) with not distinguishing between "fact" and "hypothesis"—which is why they think me so bad for the young. To all these I must say: I have never proved anything. I do not count on doing so. What I do count on is to assemble such evidences and arguments as will make those who disagree with me feel more and more uncomfortable (over, of course, a long period of time).

The gap between the two chief methods in genetics would matter less if they did not open up quite different aspects of life and of evolution. For both have to do with determination in the individual; and both have to do with connectedness in the group and in the succession of individuals. But the emphasis is contrasted. Determination (with uncertainty) is the dominant relation of analytical genetics;

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connectedness is the dominant relation of integral genetics. Connectedness first showed itself forty years ago when it was recognised (most explicitly by Fisher and myself) that *the mechanism of heredity itself underwent evolution*. We could, therefore, use evolution to explain heredity at the same time that we were using heredity to explain evolution. All this may sound to the layman a piece of far-fetched dialectic. During the last forty years these reciprocal connections have been a guide to new experiments with plants and animals. They have been a guide, however, which could yield its fullest results only when they were used in examining the most elaborate of all living situations, the evolution of human societies and the course of human history. For this reason I am calling in history to illuminate genetics at the same time and just as much as I am doing the opposite. For this reason I am also arguing that both of these specialities—genetics and history—are too important to be left to the specialist.

This is where Mr Grigson comes in. He referred to my work as "History through Genetic Spectacles". True. But equally it is "Genetics through Historical Spectacles". Some readers cannot understand this. Where, they ask (on the basis I am sure of an excellent university course), are the "Genes", those structures irrefragably attached to the Genetic Code? For them the genes are what the Rock of Ages was for William Jennings Bryan. But they put words into my mouth that I rarely use and never in the sense they suppose. From migration and a flow of people I infer a flow of genes. I ought to speak of a flow of chromosomes or a flow of heredity. But the word gene happens to be shorter and is, as its inventor said, so convenient.

THOSE WHO USE THE LANGUAGE of genetics today are in fact often maintaining an attitude of the earliest Mendelians which ought to have died with them. Analysis had the priority. Those pioneers said that all heredity is Mendelian. Therefore, if properties cannot be shown to be Mendelian and related to particular genes they are not in a proper sense hereditary. Such, for example, are the differences between people of opposite sexes or different races, between people who follow different professions, who play different games or who read different newspapers. Now I say (as Galton did) all such properties must be supposed to have a large hereditary or genetic component. And it is the business of my social and historical analysis to discover what that component is under all the known or knowable historical conditions. Or, more exactly, to frame hypotheses on the assumption that the genetic component is crucial and to test those hypotheses.

The method may be expressed, and I have in my book expressed it, in a variety of ways (that is why it is a large book). But I may illustrate it here in a new way. During the last four millennia there has been a flow of the creators of successive civilisations out of the Ancient East. It has been a great flow into Europe; a small flow into Asia; and hardly any flow at all into Africa. This new talent (or genes or chromosomes) has passed through channels created by the Jewish religion, the Greek language, and later the Roman church. What part these agencies and these movements have played is a question which touches the future as well as the past of all peoples. But what we choose to call the hereditary particles which have flowed from one society to another matter not one iota.

SINCE MOST OF MY BOOK is put in the shape of history, keeping an eye on the passage of time, historians have given it the most careful study and in their own sense they have understood it best. But they are bound to meet with difficulties for there is no standard usage of terms connected with heredity or race or breeding other than technical usage. As we saw, common ancestry does not mean common heredity. My meaning cannot therefore always be clear to those who have already accepted popular standards in preference to mine. Let me take examples from Professor Max Beloff [ENCOUNTER, October 1970.]

Two or three generations of immigration and consequent outbreeding, I suggest, brought the Athenians to the climax of their achievement. The effect was striking because the immigrants, all from the ancient East, included some of the most enterprising people in the civilised world. The same kind of thing happened over a longer period in the making of Venice, and many other states. The unmaking of Athens, of Sparta, of Venice, and of every other great society was a different kind of process. It resulted from inbreeding whose effect by genetic rules develops more slowly and with a speed depending on the size of the inbred group. It does not lead to disaster at a particular stage any more than the outbreeding leads to a climax, at a particular stage. The disaster merely follows when the inbred community faces a crisis for which its experience, its selective antecedents, have not prepared it. These crises or successions of crises had of

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course, on account of external events, a different character in Athens, in Sparta, and in Venice.

The problem is more exactly documented when we transfer it to the evolution of the English governing class following the Reformation. The dissolution of the monasteries and the abolition of clerical celibacy led, as I argued, to a high degree of heterogeneity and outbreeding in the English professional and governing classes during the 17th century. This situation produced a climax of vitality and also of discord. The two always go together, as they do with us today. Following the painful disruption of the Civil War the outbreeding and the discord were prudently damped down by the settlement of 1662: damped down for 170 years with consequences which, as I try to show, are still reflected in the more archaic institutions of English society.

Take now the question of warlike races. The distinction between warlike and unwarlike races and castes has governed the recruitment of armies, the fates of dynasties, and the course of history as far back as we can see whether in Europe, India or China, Africa or America. But the behaviour of a race or class or nation in war depends on its environment as well as on its character. And the environment here is human and genetic. It includes both the techniques and the targets of war-making. Both continually change by invention and movement. The race or class which is supreme in waging war with horses fails with the advance of engineering. This happened when the Mamelukes met Napoleon, and it has happened on a thousand other fields of battle. At one extreme, unwarlike people have no taste for war in any circumstances. They know they will be defeated. At the other extreme, warlike people do not lose their taste for war even when they are defeated. Stretching between these two extremes are the stratified nations, like Israel, who have a selected class of specialists in charge of their armed forces. When such a class shows itself to be technically more capable and socially more responsible than the enemy commanders, very few nations whose survival is endangered will prove to be un-warlike. The difference between victory and defeat still has its genetic component but it is now different in character, stratified in origin and integrated in effect.

I ought to answer another question raised by Professor Beloff. Unlike Karl Marx and Milovan Djilas I expect communist revolutions, like all earlier successful revolutions, to establish new governing classes. They are, of course, of mixed origin and have to be disguised for a while as "proletarian." Like Christians or Muslims before them, they govern by reference to their sacred books. On this scholarly basis they can invent doctrines, condemn heretics and promote saints or heroes as they require to establish their new order. Their evolution is then diversified as it was with the Christians and Muslims by the individual character of their leaders, and by the racial character of the Party or Sect and of society as a whole. The prospect is frightful but most frightful for those leaders themselves since, as with the others before them, their sacred books prevent them from understanding processes of evolution from which they cannot escape.

LASTLY I COME to the emotional problem. I do not really want to trespass on the field of the *New Statesman's* psychiatrist. I am thinking of the problem of The Progressive which looms over our social thought today, East and West. He can be recognised, not by his describing himself as progressive, but by his describing others as "reactionary". What, then, is a reactionary? He is, I suppose, one who denies the desirability of change and hence the possibility of progress. But let us agree to restrict the field. Let us say, as the progressive himself will, that the key to the problem is social justice. Can we, then, discuss the genetics of social justice?

The answer is that we can do so. But when we do so (unless we intend to keep company with Lamarck and Lysenko) we are faced by certain painful facts. At one extreme we have the strictly inbred community. There, heredity is absolute; uniformity is complete; and competition has no meaning. There, no one can dispute social equality and no one can or does denounce social injustice. Harmony is the rule of life, and stagnation is the end of it.

How different is the outbred community! There, equality is impossible. Everyone can and nearly everyone does dispute his or her rights. Why? Because here genetic recombination is at work. This recombination is the means of evolution. It has been the means of all the change or progress necessary for evolution in the past, and it will be in the future. Yet it operates by selection, by competition, by discrimination. And it operates at all levels; that is between individuals, between classes, and between races. A recent Act of Parliament in Britain prohibited discrimination between races. But you might as well try and prohibit arithmetic. The means of generating social discord and injustice is built into the

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mechanism of evolution, the mechanism of what we call progress from which human societies cannot escape.

Now there are two methods of dealing with this problem of injustice with all its attendant problems of discord and discrimination. One is to say that the genetic differences between individuals and groups *do not exist,* that there is no genetic difference between outbreeding and inbreeding, or between homogeneity and heterogeneity, or between class stratification and no stratification. We can then assume or pretend that all men and women, all classes and races are equal as laid down by the grand prevailing dogma I have already tried to suggest. All ethnic groups will then proceed to undergo harmonious psychosocial evolution. As for the chromosomes which continue in the fertile germ cells of all men and women to carry out their now ineffectual gymnastics, they are known to be extremely small. Few people claim even to have seen them. Why not follow the Russian example? Why not brush them under the carpet?

But there is another method. It is to observe the evidence of differences between human beings; to notice that they occur on a scale vastly greater than in any other species of organism; to assume that these differences are of value to our species as to all other species, being perhaps our only safeguard against future extinction; to examine the causes and consequences of these differences with all the skill and care and learning at our disposal; and to treat them with the understanding which we may reach in this way; to say, indeed, with Solzhenitsyn (in *The First Circle*): "Injustice is stronger than you. It always was and it always will be. But let it not be committed through you." Similar sentiments may be found in several Biblical passages.

The first method, as I see it, is the method of illusion underlying all the comfortable human beliefs in Equality, in Immortality, and in Free Will. It is the method which supports the general corpus of superstition and magic, including a good deal of the magic of education, religion, and politics. It underlies the intellectual and moral aimlessness of today. It is the contemporary method of The Progressive.

The second method is the method which demands a use of the evidence of history, biology, and evolution. For this reason it also demands what seem to be the less abundant qualities of discernment, compassion, and mere decency. "Reactionary" is the Progressive's poor, helpless word for describing it.

To DESCEND NOW from the general to the particular; the ground on which these questions have been most frequently debated is that of economics. Economists have always needed to apply genetic and historical assumptions to the study of society. They have done so with unequal skill and their divergent results can be seen or felt over the whole world today. In this connection I have referred to Adam Smith, to Malthus, and to Marx. I have also referred to Bagehot who published his views on natural selection in society when he was Editor of the *Economist* a century ago. I might well have added the names of J. M. Keynes and F. A. Hayek; and I might have mentioned biologists like J. B. S. Haldane who discussed such simple matters as the Salt Tax in India. All this is lost on the *Economist* today which, looking for an analogy with my work within its own philosophy, discovers nothing more pregnant than "the take-over bid." Evidently what this periodical needs is something directly affecting prices and wages, balances of payments and gross national products with each item correctly invoiced. A more careful study, however, would have shown the *Economist* how such an account could be made out.

Take first the question of immigration. History, on my genetic reckoning, shows that migration has been the key to the rise and fall of many societies. It also shows that all successful governments have taken action to control it selectively both with regard to the kind of immigrants and the interests of sections of their people. And it shows that immigration is always selective and therefore has always produced biological as well as economic effects. Unskilled labour has always brought quick profits to an employer. But skilled labour has always brought lasting advantage to a nation.

In the 17th century, white employers in Virginia and Cape Colony began to enjoy the profits from importing coloured labour, slave or free, but always cheap. These profits were still appealing to employers and governments in Britain and the United States in the 20th century because (in their respectable jargon) cheap labour has an "anti-inflationary tendency." They were the incentive for obscure but not unknown political decisions by people who put money first. Those people did not know, and no economist told them, the historical evidence that when, much later, the price for such decisions has to be paid it is not paid merely in money; and not paid merely by employers.

Again, when Richard Cobden gave his opinion, over a hundred years ago, that there were two classes of society, the savers and the

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spenders, it might well have seemed that the working classes at that time in Britain had little opportunity to show their capacity either to save or to spend. But at the present day conditions have changed and the opportunity has been widely given. A large proportion of the surplus income of the country has for the first time passed into the hands of manual workers; and with it the choice between saving and spending, between capital investment and commodity buying. The result has been a repeated crisis in the national balance of payments, and a weakness in the currency as well as in the total prospects of the nation. The distinction of behaviour is between the skilled classes who try to spend less than they earn and the unskilled classes who try to spend more than they earn. It is a distinction which marks and divides the behaviour of all stratified societies. The distinction between those who are more thoughtful, thrifty and tidy and those who are less thoughtful, thrifty, and tidy. It is the distinction between those who shut the gate after they have gone through and those who do not. For there will always be those who care too little and those who care too much.

These are distinctions with a powerful genetic component. They are to be expected from the selective movement which has always governed the evolution of social classes. It can be traced back, as property and the economics of property can be traced back, to the origins of grain farming. For the foresight and thrift and tidiness of the man who first saved seed from one year to another was a condition of survival among all the generations of his descendants.

Men are not uniform; they are differentiated. Classes are not stable; they develop. And in this differentiation and development we find history, biology, and economics, practically and productively interlocked. The earlier economists understood these things better than their successors today because they knew the individual worker and for them he greatly mattered. He had not been overwhelmed by a flood of conveniently anonymous economic units.

NOW PROFESSOR HAYEK is an economist. But he is much more and it is not just as an economist that he approaches my book. Rather he looks at it as an exercise in scientific method, open however to grave objections. He sees my problems as subject to the premises of several different well-established disciplines or faculties, well-established in his own mind. For him certain of these have a prior position. Among them are philosophy and economics, language and law. They all agree in speaking of MAN as though he were an ultimate category, or unit, sometimes distinguishable from woman but not usually differentiated into men. Professor Hayek is consistent for most of his time in adopting this attitude. "Man" he asserts has a capacity to learn. "Man" undergoes cultural or super-organic or psychosocial evolution.

All this uniformity of man fits in with what Galbraith called the conventional wisdom of the day. But it makes nonsense of inequality and of natural selection. It makes nonsense of history and biology and indeed of all our experience of life. For Professor Hayek it is implicit. Make it explicit and he at once rejects it. What he is exhibiting to us here is the wobble back and forth between reality and fantasy which some of the best minds of our age are delighted to display. It is a wobble adopted by all those who separate biology on a lower footing from the older disciplines in the study of man. It is a wobble adopted above all by those biologists who don't themselves feel strong enough to tackle the older disciplines on an equal footing. To social and bio-social scientists, after a little practice, the steps, the words and, one might say, the music of the wobble come almost naturally. So some of my critics evidently find it.

WHO WERE THE LEADERS of this unhappy cult? Professor Hayek has conveniently named some of them: the late Sir Alexander Carr Saunders, Sir Julian Huxley, and Dr Theodosius Dobzhansky—all of them biologists, and all of them honest, hard-working, well-educated academical men. What did they do to get into this pickle? Faced with the need to bring T. H. Huxley up to date—the need to explain man's place in nature to the 20th century, the need to fit religion, philosophy, economics, language and history into a biological framework which they themselves had helped to build—they caved in. They surrendered.

Can we blame them? Who would want in these hard times to undertake the labour of rethinking the foundations of our intellectual life? They took an easier course. They filled in a few words: "psychosocial", "super-organic", and so on. Goethe put it in a nutshell: *Denn eben wo Begriffe fehlen. . . .* It proved to be a very popular course. The terms of surrender were soon inscribed on the banners of Progress. They seemed to bring peace as well. Assemblies discussed them. Manifestos confirmed them. Research Councils sprouted out of them. The United Nations propagated them. Half the

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world fed on them. But for a generation later, the progress is less certain, the peace less secure, and the food less appetising. The chickens are coming home to roost.

WHEN I BEGAN TO WRITE my book ten years ago I thought the time was ripe to tell some of the truth. But not the whole truth: that would be too sudden. That, I thought, could be left for a later day. Of this some critics complained. They wanted a bigger book. But they will have to wait; and surely there is plenty to think about while waiting.

All the nations of the world, governments and peoples, advanced and backward, West and East, are united, although in nothing else, in the urge to possess in abundance the products of technology. Their systems of education are addressed almost solely to this splendid task. In over-hastily pursuing this end (apart from spoiling the sources of their food) they are busily spoiling the sources of their knowledge. They are somewhat methodically converting their universities, old and new, into polytechnics. No other course, they would say, is open to them, for who would pay for anything else? In each of these institutions a dozen different systems of belief, standards of value, and objects of achievement are set up. Most of these are vocational systems, standards, and objects. But all of them together are unconnected and inconsistent with one another.

What is the result? Most young students do not easily notice these inconsistencies. But, when a few dissenting spirits point them out, the absurdity of the whole thing becomes plain. It is plainer to the young than the old. It is here that Professor Beloff's complaint has its place. Any fundamental criticism of what is wrong in a society is dangerous for the young. But it is still more dangerous for the society. Surely, thoughtful men should take note of these things before the less thoughtful have formed their opinions and acted upon them. The question which my book is intended, by easy steps, to raise in the mind of a thoughtful reader is the question of just how wrong the world's societies and the world's ideas about them are today.

Costa del Sol

Beyond these overflowing tables
the clay-coloured children of
the fishermen drift barefoot
among almond trees, silting up
at the edge of the plaza.

The priest is inattentive
to people made of earth. Dust
shies from his boots' polish
as he maneuvers his belly out
of the town's only new Volkswagen.

I roll this contrast around
in my mouth with a third self-
congratulatory ten-peseta brandy.
Sand from the hotel's private
beach grates in my sandals.

Douglas Hill

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LETTERS

The Survivor & The Hero

TERRENCE DES PRES' *The Survivor*, [ENCOUNTER, September] sensitive as it is, yet exemplifies what seems to me the greatest and most dangerous delusion facing man today: that his predicament is unique. It is as if the Western intellectual were hypnotised by the brief, partial immunities of the last two centuries—a moment, in the perspective of human life on earth—during all of which, in less fortunate continents, the Extreme Situation was still being enforced with archaic barbarity.

When was the Extreme Situation new? In small isolated palaeolithic communities, perishing of hunger or disease, the last one left must have believed himself the last of his kind in all the universe. Our imagination today can scarcely grasp the horror of these lonely deaths. In far later time, the Deluge legends all assume the cataclysm to be universal. Camus had no need to invent his closed plague-stricken city; he has merely reproduced the besieged Athens of Thucydides. As for the death-camps, what happened to the Athenian captives in the Syracusan quarries? Or to the expendable slaves in the Attic silver mines?

In a city hit by a nuclear bomb, one stands a better than even chance of instantaneous death. Compare this with the fate, of, say, fourth-century Sicilian towns sacked by the Carthaginians, where hordes of civilian fugitives were butchered by hand, with, whenever the victors had time for it, sadistic tortures from which even the Nazi camp-guards might perhaps have learned something. Given a choice between these two situations, I would settle most gratefully for the bomb.

After the nuclear holocaust, or the antibiotic-resistant pandemic for which we are overdue, the passive Survivor will have survived his survival-value, to the community and even himself. I suspect he will accept, without much demur, the protection of the Hero, whose type Mr Des Pres wants to become extinct. Few things disconcert me more than the current rejection of those qualities, not only active but spiritual, which man's evolutionary instinct has always caused him to respect, even at the cost of some relative sacrifice of his own self-esteem. It is this sacrifice which is now being refused. It is a dangerous refusal, and an ignoble one.

That equality of opportunity has often failed to produce equality of the essential man, has loosed in our day a dreadful tide of envy, no longer of mere privilege, but of human quality itself. It has produced the commercial cliché of the Anti-Hero. Let serious intellectuals, at least, think twice before they join the mob engaged in lynching the Hero. Man's history suggests that we shall need him yet.

MARY RENAULT

Cape Town

In the German Academy

IN Melvin J. Lasky's dismal account [ENCOUNTER, October] of the academic degeneration in Berlin's Free University, he also mentions several other West German University centres where the situation, although not as bad, is bad enough. It must hardly be a consolation to him that this "Left Fascist" turn of events is what he predicted in his "Revolution Diary" of three years ago [ENCOUNTER, August 1968] at a time when so many saw in the Great Student Revolt a victorious blow for freedom and democracy and anti-authoritarianism in higher education.

Freedom? Here in the University of Regensburg we now have, in the most literal sense of the word, less freedom—*i.e.* less choice—than we had before. In those faculties (mostly, of course, the social sciences) where the New Left militants have seized some measure of power, there are now straight down-the-line courses of Marxist indoctrination. Mr Lasky's report seemed to suggest that these were "full" because of student enthusiasm. Not so. Here the course in "Basic Elements of Historical Materialism"—which is a narrow-minded, orthodox, uncritical reading of Marx's *Das Kapital*—is *obligatory*.

Democracy? The German courts will in the next months be testing the legitimacy of many of the recent student elections which are giving the militants so much academic power under the new participation clauses of the *Hochschulreform*. It is extremely doubtful whether in any of the cases under litigation the required 50% electoral participation was actually reached. Many of the students are allowed to vote two and three times, if their studies happen to involve more than one faculty department. Thus, in several German universities the amount of votes cast came out actually to double the amount of students registered! But, after all, fiddling and diddling the ballot-box is not undemocratic or unethical—if it is done in the service of the revolution.

Anti-authoritarianism? You should listen to the tone and the phraseology of the little adolescent commissars who are trying to run things. Perhaps our German language has a special gift for sinister ambiguities and vagueness. M. J. Lasky called attention to the usage of the phrase "*umfunktionieren*!", which doesn't quite come out as "re-structuring"; it has a bullying hectoring implication which is not infrequently the rationale for campus violence. Just the other day a militant student pamphlet here announced that measures would have to be taken to "make things clear" to the liberal-moderate opposition, that any delaying action amounted to sabotage and would no longer be "acceptable" or "tolerated." We have

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all had enough experience in the last years to know what such clarification and intolerance really means. To paraphrase the acute proverbialism of Huey Long, anti-authoritarianism has come to the German academy in the form of a new authoritarianism.

RUDOLPH MEYER

Regensburg

Neville & "The Innocence of Oz"

KEITH BOTSFORD'S analysis of "The Innocence of Oz" [ENCOUNTER, November], despite its many brilliant insights, does not quite account for the sheer peculiarity of the Ozzian mind at work. How can it really be *innocent* when, as his own documentary report abundantly shows, it is both guilty of and corrupted by every trendy bit of nonsense which has emerged since that historic day in London when Mr Kenneth Tynan, screwing all his courage together (and happily mastering his slight stutter), fulfilled a life-time ambition by being the first man to say "F-f-f——" on BBC Television.

It is not so much that the Ozzian mind is "innocent" of knowledge and culture, or of the use of meaningful words in a logical argument. It is rather that everything seems to reach Mr Richard Neville and his Ozzian friends like some pre-packaged pabulum, as if indeed they were all infants imbibing a prepared formula. That these young Caesars never seem to get around to feeding (intellectually speaking, I mean) on more substantial meat is what makes their childishness so infuriating. In Neville's case one suspects it is the fault of a mediocre Australian education (plenty of reason for Neville to have stayed Down Under and stage his revolt there!) combined with the fact that his post-graduate adult education in the London emigration appears to have been obtained only by a Soho reading of the so-called Underground Press. Out of these paltry fragments one fashions a non-working knowledge of Marx and Freud, medicine and linguistics, music and revolt and home-made bombs. This, then, produces the kind of sensibility which thrills to (in Neville's words) "the lightning emergence of the liberation movements of gays, blacks, women and children" and the kind of political sagacity which then goes on to recommend that "obviously these alternative pockets must connect with Third World movements." No amount of information from the Overground world ever seems to reach their tiny minds. Woman's Lib in the Arab world? The Gay International in Castro's Cuba? Black Power in Brown Asia? But why ask questions when they know all the answers?

At rare moments the Ozzian almost seems able to confront himself with a troubled doubt. Thus, when Jerry Rubin announces in his latest book, *We Are Everywhere*, that he doesn't trust anyone who isn't stoned all or most of the time, Neville comments that this may be "extreme"—"yet one knows what he means." Ah, but a small doubt intrudes. "Some of Lieutenant Calley's troops were probably stoned." So what is the answer? None at all. Trying to solve problems in a coherent sequential manner is only a square prejudice—even if one leaves in mid-air suspension a Revolutionary Programme which may mean high happiness or may mean brutal criminality. One doesn't have to *know* the answers, one "feels" them as one dangles in exhilaration on the soft curves of a play-powerful question-mark.

> "If aggression has outlived its usefulness, what better substitute than exhilarating exploration of our sexuality in word, deed and fantasy?"

It was a weary wit in Fleet Street who suggested to Neville that he send his query to the Commandant of the Soviet Occupation Forces in Prague.

What I also find clinically interesting is how the arrested intellectual development carries the Ozzian mind to a curiously self-centred infantilism, as in a child who knows only itself and is under the impression that only its lollipop is sweet and real. Neville has somehow persuaded himself that only he and his movement are the real guardians of humane values and that all his critics are twisted eccentrics, if not worse. Thus, when he recounts a horrible incident of sexual assault during Lt. Calley's My Lai massacre he goes on to remark:

> "One imagines that if Lord Longford and Mary Whitehouse were landed in the midst of this carnage, they would be shocked that the soldier's fly was undone."

(Is, then, one permitted to imagine that if the Ozzian were landed in the midst of this carnage he would recommend getting even more stoned and getting on with "doing one's own thing"?) In this "imaginative" outburst Neville is carrying holier-than-thou hippy arrogance to the point of infantile solipsism. Only his lollipop tastes good, only his conscience is authentic.

In this article from which I have been quoting—it appeared in *The Guardian* (27 September, p. 14), presumably after Keith Botsford wrote his account of the *Oz* Trial—Richard Neville made a number of other notable revelations. In fact in it he makes a

Neville

(The Guardian)

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very touching confession of his failure at the Old Bailey:

> "My gushing of 'generation gaps' at the *Oz* trial finale was the product of six weeks' frustration, a war cry of defeat, a spasm of tottering coherence which resorted to weary sociologese in a desperate, disillusioned attempt to trap in a cliché what we had apparently failed to articulate through 19 expert witnesses and over a dozen hours of dramatic jury speeches . . ."

Confessing is, of course, good for the soul, but is one permitted to wonder what happened to all of that vaunted "Play-Power" in such a moment of personal crisis? Why could there be no recourse to those celebrated Alternative Nostrums ("Sex, Violence, Drugs") in order to cope with frustration, defeatism, desperation, and disillusionment? It almost sounds as if Neville were becoming the Tired Businessman of the underground. But he has, now at 30 and almost spent, another kind of geriatric explanation, and he puts it this way in one of the more revealing autobiographical analogies in recent Hippy literature:

> "Personally speaking. . . . I feel like an ageing prize flasher: a man once caught opening his raincoat on the last tube, destined to forever repeat the performance on the Circle Line, long after the original desire has vanished."

Well, if Mr Neville would try some elementary exercises in toilet training—say, like trying to zip up (or, depending on the style of his Chelsea gear, button up)—he might succeed in getting off the line. He might even discover some kind of future for himself—"Ho hum, Life goes on", he notes wearily—beyond the infantile spectacle of genital exhibitionism. He likes to tantalize his readers with the suggestion that he is still capable of learning something. Well, he might for a start try the first dozen chapters in Dr Spock's manual. On him they might just work.

J. L. B. PHILLIPS

Oxford

Laqueur's "Jewish Question"

WALTER LAQUEUR (ENCOUNTER, August) is probably right in maintaining that there is a Jewish Question today in the sense that Zionism is met with increasing antagonism and is losing sympathy even in quarters that a decade ago were prepared to applaud anything Jewish. It is hard to know how much is anti-Semitism in disguise. Having seen, however, how old-fashioned anti-Semitism lingers in the country where I now live, I would be the last one to dispute Laqueur's thesis that anti-Semitism still is a problem and that some anti-Zionism is indeed anti-Semitism in disguise, or to belittle his fears for future developments. But Laqueur, like so many pro-Zionists, also puts his head in the sand and cannot, or will not see that other, and to the best of my understanding more important, factors are at work.

Laqueur presents us with the incredible view that

> "the hard nub of the matter is this: Zionism was not strong enough to establish *faits accomplis*. The expulsion of ten million Germans from their Eastern homes (to mention a recent example) was immediately accepted. . . ."

It is true that the Communist (Russian-Polish-Czechoslovakian) expulsions were accepted as *faits accomplis* backed as they were by overwhelming and reckless military power and probably also because there was a widespread feeling that the Germans reaped what they themselves had sown. Also the extinction of the Baltic states was accepted as *faits accomplis*. But neither made Communism respectable, and Laqueur cannot possibly recommend this as a method of gaining or preserving sympathy. And this is after all the question he himself is posing: why do people who sympathised with Zionism immediately after World War II, increasingly turn their backs to it?

The "hard nub of the matter" is simply that the behaviour of Zionism and, in particular, Israel has been so disappointingly bad that decent people find it more and more difficult to give their support to Zionism. In creating a Jewish state in Palestine injustice was inflicted by Zionism upon a people who had no share in the anti-Semitic excesses of Christian and not-so-Christian Europe. The Palestinians reaped what Europe had sown. Laqueur does not deny that. "The very act of the creation of a Jewish state on a territory largely inhabited by other people was of course an act of injustice. But," continues Laqueur, obviously anxious to gloss over this unpleasant fact, "throughout history states have developed from invasion, colonisation and armed struggle, not peaceful development and legal contract." So, never mind. Forget about it.

It is precisely this cynical attitude that repels sympathisers. It made me lose sympathy already ten years ago. Injustices may be made; but they cannot and should not be swept under the rug like that. It is always the victims of injustices that should have our sympathy and Zionists should not be surprised that sympathies are shifting from the Jews to the Palestinians, Basques and other oppressed people. And when, in addition, on the one hand we are blamed for insufficient guilt feelings for the holocaust and dwindling sympathy with the Jews, and on the other hand see nothing but callous cynicism about the fate of the Palestinian people with no signs of feelings of guilt or even responsibility for this injustice, it is hard to escape the conclusion that we are faced with people who themselves apply double standards, one for Jews and another one for the rest of the world. This is what causes dismay and even disgust for Zionism and its offspring Israel. Laqueur would help the cause of the Jews against old-fashioned and new anti-Semitism much better if he could explain that to the *colons* in Jerusalem.

BENT HANSEN

Department of Economics,
University of California,
Berkeley, California

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MR HANSEN'S LETTER puzzles me; I am not altogether sure in what way it is connected with my article. About the merits and demerits of Zionism, about Israel and the Arabs a flood of ink has been spilled and I do not want to add to this on this occasion. I am all in favour of a just solution of the conflict and have written about it on various opportunities. But Mr Hansen seems to believe that were it not for Zionism and the policy of Israel there would be no "Jewish question", and no anti-semitism. To call this a *non sequitur* would be a polite understatement.

WALTER LAQUEUR

London

Feydeau & Elephants

I APPRECIATE Mr Martin Esslin's appraisal of my volume *Four Farces by Georges Feydeau* as a "good" and "creditable" collection, with a "workmanlike introduction" (July 1971). Perhaps, however, your readers may want to weigh his judgment of the translations themselves—nominated in the U.S.A. last year for a National Book Award—against those of other critics.

Mr Esslin suggests that to an English audience the translations might seem "elephantine". He is entitled to his opinion (though, with all due respect, Mr Esslin is, himself, more distinguished as a scholar than as an English stylist). But I find it hard to reconcile it with that of another British reviewer, who praised the translations' easy readability, and who went on to say how very actable they seemed (*Times Literary Supplement*, 18 June). Mr Esslin's choice of adjective is even more strikingly at odds with the comments of the *New York Times Book Review* critic, for whom "these translations are as light as air" (18 April). (Which leads me to wonder if American air is heavier than English, or if English elephants are lighter than American!)

I do not write to quibble with the opinion of a very esteemed scholar—or, certainly, to try to change it—but only to let your readers know that it is not universal.

NORMAN R. SHAPIRO

Wesleyan University,
Middletown, Conn.

Stuck?

see page 27

AUTHORS & CRITICS

Arthur Calder-Marshall is the author of a biography of Havelock Ellis (Hart-Davis, 1959) and of works of criticism, novels, biography and autobiography. *Lewd, Blasphemous and Obscene* will be published by Hutchinson next summer. . . .

C. D. Darlington is Sherardian Professor of Botany, University of Oxford. His controversial book, *The Evolution of Man and Society*, was published by Allen & Unwin in 1969. . . .

Georges Csato writes: "Born 1910 in Budapest. Educated in Vienna. Studied painting in Berlin and Prague. At present resident in Paris. Paintings exhibited in National Galleries, Montreal and Toronto. One-man shows in London, Paris, and Amsterdam. Married to a British wife who helped write the stories. . . ."

Barbara Hardy is Professor of English Literature, Birkbeck College. Her books include *The Novels of George Eliot, The Appropriate Form, The Moral Art of Dickens*. A book on Thackeray is in the press. . . . **Molly M. Mahood** is Professor of English Literature at the University of Kent. Author of *Poetry and Humanism, Shakespeare's Wordplay*, and *Joyce Cary's Africa*. . . . **William Walsh** is Professor of Education, and Douglas Grant Fellow in Commonwealth Literature, in the University of Leeds. Author of *The Use of Imagination, Coleridge, A Manifold Voice, R. K. Narayan*. . . . **Roy Fuller** is Oxford Professor of Poetry. His most recent books are a novel, *The Carnal Island*, and his first two years' Oxford lectures, *Owls and Artificers*. . . . . **Theodore Weiss** is Professor of Creative Arts at Princeton University. For the past 26 years he has edited and published *The Quarterly Review of Literature*. His latest collection of poems is *The World Before Us*, and he has written a book on Shakespeare, *The Breath of Clowns and Kings*. . . .

Cover design by **Colin Banks** and **John Miles.**

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ENCOUNTER Magazine is published in London by Encounter Ltd. 59 St. Martin's Lane London WC2N 4JS.

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY WATMOUGHS LIMITED, IDLE, BRADFORD; AND LONDON

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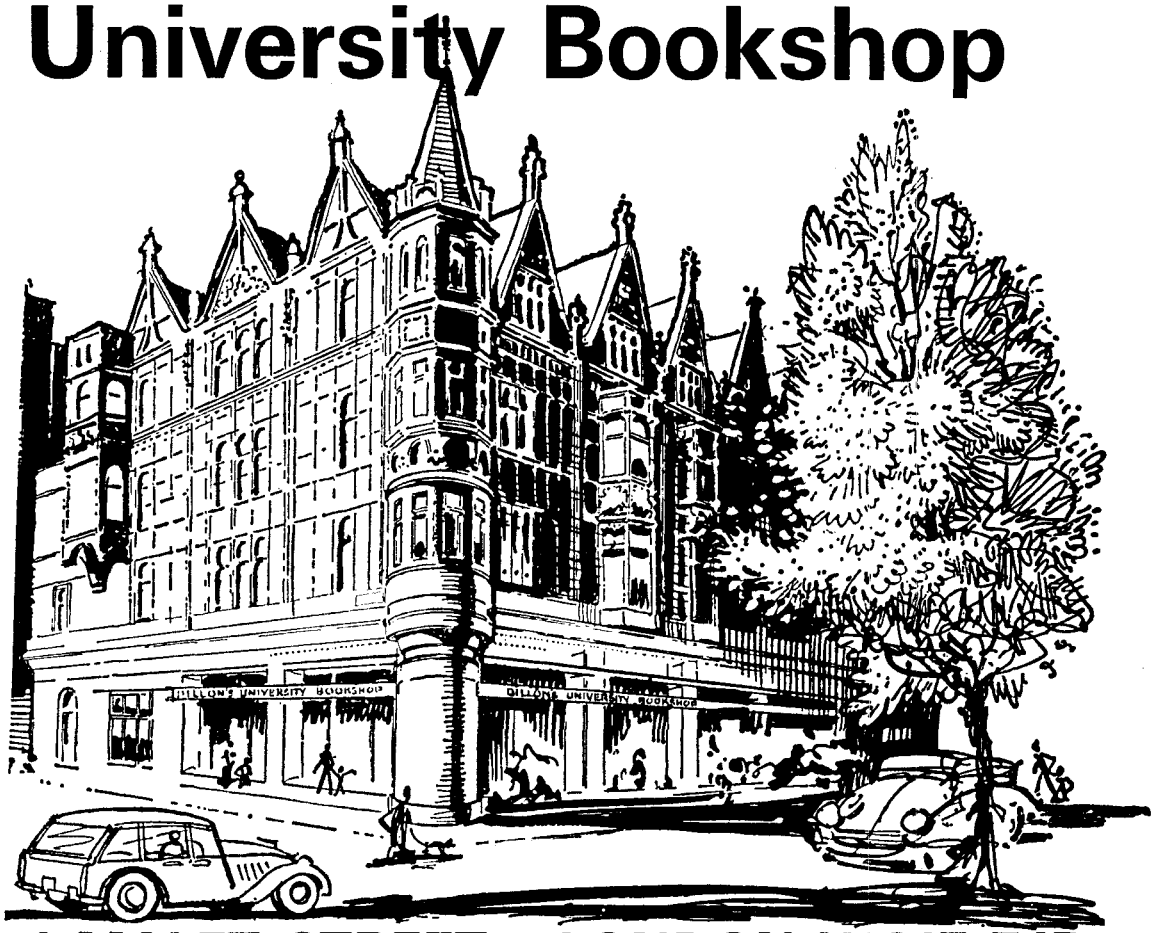

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